

Dempsey: Bergdahl could be charged

By JON HARPER
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Army Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl could face punishment if he deserted his unit, the top U.S. military officer suggested Tuesday.

"As for the circumstances of his capture ... we'll learn the facts," Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Martin Dempsey said in a statement on his Facebook page. "Our Army's leaders will not look away from misconduct if it occurred."

On Saturday, the White House announced that it had released five detainees from the military prison at Guantanamo Bay,

Cuba, in exchange for the Taliban's release of Bergdahl, who was being held by the militants following his capture in Afghanistan in 2009.



Bergdahl

Barack Obama appeared in the Rose Garden next to Bergdahl's parents to celebrate his release.

In remarks made in Poland on Tuesday, Obama defended his decision:

"The United States has always had a pretty sacred rule, and that is: we don't leave our men or women in uniform behind," Obama said during the first stop of a four-day European trip.

Asked about the circumstances of Bergdahl's capture, Obama said that no one was debriefing him yet and that it did not change the responsibility to try to recover him.

"Regardless of circumstances, whatever those circumstances may turn out to be, we still get an American prisoner back," he said.

"Period. Full stop. We don't condition that."

But rather than being welcomed home, some are calling for Bergdahl to be prosecuted for desertion or other violations of the Uniform Code of Military Justice. Under the UCMJ, desertion in wartime can carry the death penalty.

SEE BERGDALH ON PAGE 4

EUROPEAN REASSURANCE

Obama touts \$18 plan to boost US military presence in eastern countries

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany

President Barack Obama announced Tuesday that he will seek \$1 billion to boost the U.S. military presence in eastern Europe as part of an effort to reassure and train allies rattled by recent Russian aggression in the region.

In addition, the U.S. will be moving more military hardware to the region, Obama said. "Under this effort, and with the support of Congress, the United States will preposition more equipment in Europe," Obama said during a news conference in Warsaw, Poland.

The "European Reassurance Initiative" calls for an intensified rotational mission in Eastern Europe, where the U.S. has already stepped up the presence of warships in the Black Sea as well as fighters and other aircraft over the Baltic states and ground troops throughout the

region. The initiative, which requires congressional approval, also calls for more security cooperation with non-NATO allies such as Georgia and Moldova, two countries that have been at odds with Moscow.

Poland, which has been in the forefront of those nations calling for a more robust response to Russia, is likely to welcome Obama's request for additional defense funding. But not all of its partners share Warsaw's sense of urgency when it comes to Russia, and most have been slashing their defense spending rather than boosting it.

Prepositioning more equipment in Europe could be a precursor to a plan to ramp up the readiness of NATO's Response Force, which includes troops from a Texas-based Army brigade and thousands of troops from other member states.

SEE PLAN ON PAGE 2

'Under this effort, and with the support of Congress, the United States will preposition more equipment in Europe.'

President Barack Obama

'These efforts will not come at the expense of other defense priorities, such as our commitment to the Asia Pacific rebalance.'

White House statement



QUOTE OF THE DAY

"I used Tinder before I found out about Hinge and it was creep central. ... I used it for a few months but instead of looking for someone, it was more like a funny joke."

—Melissa Ellard, 23, who uses Hinge and said she wouldn't have gone on a date in the past six months were it not for the app

See story on Page 15

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EUROPE

Plan: Unclear how boost meshes with the current drawdown plan

FROM FRONT PAGE

Top U.S. and NATO military commander Gen. Philip Breedlove has stated that the force should be transformed to meet current threats, but that "readiness isn't free." So far, the force has been used mainly for training events, but Breedlove has emphasized the need to bolster the unit's ability to mobilize on short notice.

At the same time, the U.S. continues to analyze its force structure in Europe.

"In addition to this initiative, we are reviewing our force presence in Europe in light of the new security challenges on the continent," the White House stated. "These efforts will not come at the expense of other defense priorities, such as our commitment to the Asia Pacific rebalance."

For the Pentagon, the challenge is balancing competing needs at a time of limited resources. While the U.S. wants to reassure allies, it also is working on a plan to close and consolidate more bases in Europe. Those plans continue to move forward in seeming contradiction to efforts aimed at reassuring allies.

By beefing up the rotational presence and increasing exercises, the U.S. could be seeking a way to make up the difference.

John Deni, a professor at the U.S. Army War College, said more rotational forces could boost readiness and the military's ability to partner with allies, but that such a program will be efficient only if rotations are over a long duration.

"We do need to be more responsive. So how do you do that in a more cost effective way? It's not cost-effective to move families [lover to Europe]," Deni said. "Deploying rotational forces can be, but it needs to be over 11 or 12 months to avoid enormous transportation costs."

What isn't yet clear is how much other nations will be willing to spend to ensure allies are able to more rapidly respond to crises.

"Everyone has the capacity to



ALIX KEPICZ/AP

President Barack Obama, left, and Polish President Bronislaw Komorowski stand in front of an F-16 jet fighter as they speak to the press at the military airport in Warsaw, Poland, on Tuesday. Obama announced that he will seek \$1 billion to boost the U.S. military presence in Eastern Europe.

do their fair share, to do a proportional amount to make sure we have the resources, the planning, the integration, the training in order to be effective," Obama said.

A long-term plan to ramp up NATO's military readiness is underway, but political consensus on the details isn't likely until alliance heads of state assemble for September's summit in Wales, NATO's top official said Tuesday.

The crisis in Ukraine — along with a range of other threats, including terrorism, piracy and cybercrime — means the 28-nation alliance must adapt, NATO Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen said.

"So we need to make NATO fitter, faster and more flexible," Rasmussen said at the start of two days of talks with defense ministers in Brussels. "We will do that through a readiness action plan. To make sure our forces are even more responsive, with the right capabilities, the right training and the right resources. This work is already ongoing, but the crisis makes it more urgent."

When heads of state from all NATO members meet in Wales in September, Russian aggression around Ukraine is sure to dominate events even as the alliance prepares for a post-combat mission in Afghanistan.

Tensions between the west and Russia are at their highest since

US troops in Europe

President Barack Obama has announced plans to boost U.S. military presence in Europe at a cost of up to \$1 billion. Number of U.S. military in European countries, as of March 31:

Total 67,423

Fewer than 25

*Greenland (not shown on map) has 127

NOTE: Since March 31, some military have been shifted to Poland and other eastern European countries in response to the crisis in Ukraine

SOURCE: Defense Manpower Data Center

PAT CARR/MCT

the end of the Cold War more than 20 years ago. For its part, the U.S. has signaled that it aims to boost its presence in Europe, at least on a rotational basis, as evidenced by Obama's plan to seek \$1 billion from Congress.

Rasmussen credited the U.S. with taking a lead in ongoing efforts to reassure allies in the east through a series of exercises in the Baltics and Poland.

"The U.S. has reacted swiftly after Russia's illegal military actions in Ukraine. And I appreciate that other allies have followed," Rasmussen said.

Meanwhile, Rasmussen also

condemned Tuesday's presidential election in Syria, which he characterized as a force that "doesn't fulfill international standards for free, fair, transparent elections."

"I'm sure no ally will recognize the outcome of these so-called elections," Rasmussen said.

Anti-missile Patriot batteries from three NATO member states continue to operate in southern Turkey to protect Turkish airspace from any potential incursion from Syria. The U.S., Netherlands and Germany have been contributors to the mission.

vandiver.john@stripes.com

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MILITARY

Recommendations for Europe base closures pending

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — Recommendations for more base closures and consolidations in Europe will be submitted to Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel in a matter of weeks as part of an ongoing effort to shed unneeded facilities on the continent, according to the Defense Department.

Last month, the Pentagon announced it will close 21 outdated facilities in Europe — mainly housing and recreation complexes — for an annual savings of \$60 million. But that is just the start, with the next round of closures expected to take aim at actual military installations as part of the European Infrastructure Consolidation review — a “BRAC-like” analysis launched more than a year ago.

The primary “capacity analysis,” which involves recommendations for each service on ways to consolidate in Europe, is expected to be on Hagel’s desk within two months, if not earlier, according to a Defense Department official.

The study, which began well before Russia’s recent intervention in Ukraine, comes at an awkward time for the military. On the one hand, the Pentagon wants to find efficiencies and demonstrate to Congress a willingness to downsize overseas. Lawmakers have long asserted that Europe bases should be cut before even discussing the possibility of unpopular base closures on U.S. soil. At the same time, Russia’s actions in Ukraine have complicated downsizing plans as the U.S. and its al-

lies contend with what Gen. Philip Breedlove, the top U.S. commander in Europe, has called a new security paradigm on the continent.

“The events in Ukraine have changed the assumptions underlying European security,” Breedlove, NATO’s supreme allied commander, said last month. “NATO must undergo a strategic adaptation to address Russia’s use of snap exercises, cyberactivities and covert operations to achieve their state objectives. With this fundamental change is our security environment, we must transform.”

Russia’s annexation of Crimea has been a source of particular angst in former Warsaw Pact states — particularly in Poland, where leaders have indicated a desire for a permanent U.S. presence in the country. Breedlove said NATO shouldn’t rule out positioning forces in eastern Europe in an effort to realign alliance military power closer to potential hot spots.

However, a budget-challenged Pentagon is faced with the difficult, and perhaps contradictory, task of showing a renewed commitment to European security in the face of a more assertive Russia while simultaneously shrinking the size of its footprint in Europe.

John Deni, a professor at the U.S. Army War College and expert on the military mission in Europe, says the U.S. should be cautious about giving up too much real estate in connection with any base realignment.

“There might be some room for consolidation, but that needs to be weighed against the fact that we



ADAM L. MATHIS/Stars and Stripes

The Department of Defense would close RAF Alconbury, shown above, if given funding by Congress to build an intelligence center at RAF Croughton. Congress is waiting to fund the center until the European review of military bases is complete.

diminish our strategic flexibility,” Deni said. “Once we close a facility, we are never getting it back and we have no way of predicting what future crises might be and where you need them. If there is room for consolidation it will be on the margins of what we have left.”

“There might still be some room for consolidation, but that needs to be weighed against the fact that we diminish our strategic flexibility.”

John Deni
U.S. Army War
College professor

An increased reliance on rotational forces in Europe could be one way to offset a smaller permanent forward presence or reduced

network of bases. On May 27, the White House announced that President Barack Obama would seek \$1 billion from Congress for a new “European Reassurance Initiative,” which would aim to increase troop rotations on the continent and help train allies.

Meanwhile, it will likely be several months before final decisions on the base structure are announced publicly, given a bureaucratic process that involves coordination with respective host nations.

But there are already some indications of the direction DOD wants to go in areas of closure and consolidation. For instance, the department’s 2015 budget request includes funding for a new intelligence center at RAF Croughton, England — a move that would result in the closure of both RAF Alconbury and RAF Molesworth, according to budget documents. Those plans are on hold by Congress pending the conclusion of the Pentagon’s consolidation review.

Others areas likely to be scrutinized are Army bases in Germa-

ny, which still account for most of the military footprint in Europe. Two garrisons — one in Schweinfurt and one in Bamberg — are already slated to close in the coming year. The U.S. Army’s Baumholder garrison, which over the years has frequently been mentioned as a place for potential closure, could get a second look.

But while much remains unknown about the future base map in Europe, advocates for a strong forward presence in Europe say recent Russian aggression should be an argument against sweeping cuts and closures.

“For those that think we’ve cut enough from Europe, the timing is obviously helpful,” Deni said. “It makes sense to really take stock of where we are with the remaining force structure and infrastructure, but in the past, I think a lot of this has been budget-driven and not strategy-driven. I think this [crisis with Russia] reminds us we’re still going to retain a strategic interest in Europe.”

vandiver.john@stripes.com

AFN awaits FIFA clearance to broadcast World Cup

By HENDRICK SIMOES
Stars and Stripes

American Forces Network officials are once again doing some last-minute scrambling to secure the broadcast rights to televise the World Cup soccer tournament.

The World Cup starts June 12 in Brazil, with the U.S. playing its opening match against Ghana June 16. Whether U.S. troops from Portugal to Okinawa will be able to watch the games on AFN is still up in the air, and that’s not sitting well with many viewers.

AFN officials are telling curious viewers simply that AFN is working “diligently to acquire broadcast rights.”

But on AFN’s Facebook page, anxious fans have given the network a yellow card.

“AFN, I know you are working diligently to get the rights to broadcast World Cup 2014. But could you please let us know how long it will take to make the decision?” posted Ram Bhattarai, a U.S. sailor stationed in Japan.

In an email response to Stars and Stripes,

“AFN, I know you are working diligently to get the rights to broadcast World Cup 2014. But could you please let us know how long it will take to make a decision?”

Ram Bhattarai

U.S. sailor stationed in Japan in online post

ESPN said it had granted AFN permission to use its feed. However, AFN still needs to get full clearance from FIFA, the international soccer football governing authority, before it can broadcast the matches.

The entire process started two years ago and is now in its final phase, said AFN officials.

“When it comes to getting the rights to the World Cup, the AFN Broadcast Center first goes to FIFA to determine which countries have the exclusive rights to air the matches in their country. AFN then goes to the individual rights holders in any country where AFN is seen, and asks them

to waive their exclusive rights for AFN to be able to broadcast the matches to the U.S. military audience stationed overseas. Once AFN gets the waivers from these countries, our last step is to go back to FIFA and ask permission to air the World Cup,” George Smith, a network spokesman, said in an email to Stars and Stripes.

This isn’t the first time World Cup coverage has been a nail-biting ordeal for AFN’s audience.

The network didn’t get the rights to broadcast the 2010 World Cup until 11 days before the opening match. It acquired permission for all 64 matches that year.

For the 2006 World Cup, wrangling over the broadcast rights between AFN and FIFA made national headlines. Five days into the tournament, Rupert Murdoch’s News Corp. acquired the rights for AFN to broadcast the rest of the tournament.

For those already looking for alternatives to AFN, FIFA has a list on its website of media outlets worldwide that have the rights to broadcast the World Cup — some via Internet streaming.

However, this won’t do much good for the many soccer fan servicemembers serving on ships at sea or in remote areas.

The World Cup runs for about a month, with the final game on July 13 in Brasilia, Brazil. Along with Ghana, the U.S. team is in the fabled “group of death.” The Americans will play Germany and Portugal — ranked No. 2 and No. 3 in the world, respectively — in their quest to advance to the round of 16.

Matt Millham and Dave Ornauer contributed to this report.
simoes.hendrick@stripes.com
Twitter: @hendricksimoes

MILITARY



Jani and Bob Bergdahl, parents of Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl, speak to the media during a press conference at Gowen Field in Boise, Idaho, on Sunday.

Bergdahl: Focus now is mostly on recuperation, reintegration rather than punishment, officials say

FROM FRONT PAGE

Some of Bergdahl's former unitmates and others in the military have accused Bergdahl of being a deserter, and that American soldiers were killed searching for him.

Dempsey acknowledged that servicemembers risked their lives to try to find Bergdahl. "I want to thank those who for almost five years worked to find him, prepared to rescue him and ultimately put themselves at risk to recover him," Dempsey said on Facebook.

It's also possible Bergdahl won't be punished, even if he is guilty of wrongdoing leading up to his capture.

A senior defense official, speaking to CNN on condition of anonymity, said that "five years [of being held captive by the Taliban] is enough."

In an interview with The Associated Press, Dempsey suggested that the military is sensitive to accusations that it lets people off the hook. He noted that U.S. military leaders "have been accused of looking away from misconduct," and said "it's premature" to assume Bergdahl would not face discipline.

Still, Dempsey has cautioned against rushing to judgment.

"Like any American, he is innocent until proven guilty," Dempsey said.

NBC News reported Tuesday that the Army is about to launch a high-level inquiry into the circumstances of Bergdahl's disappearance and his personal conduct leading up to it.

But an Army official, speaking to Stars and Stripes on background because he wasn't authorized to discuss Bergdahl's situation on the record, said right now the Army is focused on Bergdahl's health and reintegration.

A Facebook statement, Dempsey said the military would

"learn the facts" about Bergdahl's capture "when he is able to provide them."

Pentagon spokesman Col. Steve Warren told reporters Tuesday that an Article 15-6 investigation looking into the circumstances surrounding Bergdahl's disappearance had previously been conducted. That investigation, which was conducted by Combined Joint Task Force-82 in Afghanistan, is now closed, Warren said. He would not provide details about the probe because it is classified.

Warren also said that the Army was likely to make an announcement about a Bergdahl-related investigation Tuesday afternoon.

The U.S. military plans to dedicate a lot of resources to facilitate Bergdahl's reintegration. The Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany, where Bergdahl has been receiving care since his arrival Sunday, said in a statement that the team of personnel who will assist in the soldier's reintegration will likely involve hundreds of people — including Army investigators and attorneys — from multiple branches of the military.

Several experts will accompany the former prisoner when he moves on to the next level of care, hospital officials said. They will include at least one physician and one psychologist trained in survival, escape, resistance and evasion.

But a timeline has not yet been set for that transition, officials said. He's expected to continue the reintegration process at San Antonio Military Medical Center.

"Operational planners, aircrews, medical professionals, security officers, attorneys, chaplains, and specialists in finance, personnel, public affairs, and logistics are involved in these operations," the hospital said in a statement. "Family members also assist as he continues in the rein-

More stories about Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl and an interactive timeline recapping the saga starsandstripes.com/go/bergdahl

tegration process."

At Landstuhl, Bergdahl has begun the decompression process aimed at maximizing his health and welfare "in earnest," the hospital said.

"During this phase of reintegration, Sgt. Bergdahl is receiving more complete medical exams and will receive formal, structured briefings," a hospital statement said. "Typically, information obtained in the operations and intelligence debriefings is immediately disseminated."

A Pentagon spokesman said Monday that questions from Army questioners focus on intelligence matters as well as the conditions he faced while in captivity.

Dempsey also told the AP that Bergdahl's promotion to staff sergeant, which was expected soon, won't necessarily happen because he is no longer missing in action, and therefore is no longer eligible for automatic promotions.

Army officials would not discuss Bergdahl's promotion status on-the-record when contacted by Stars and Stripes.

Stars and Stripes reporter Jennifer Starn contributed to this report. harperson@starsandstripes.com Twitter: @HarperStripes

5 Taliban traded for Bergdahl described in Gitmo case files

By ADAM TAYLOR
AND KEVIN SIEFF
The Washington Post

The release of Army Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl this weekend was greeted at first by elation. But among some, the positive feelings have given way to more mixed emotions as some of the worrying implications of his release become clear.

One big concern is that the United States will be releasing five Taliban commanders in exchange for Bergdahl. So who are these men? And what might they do when released?

When the five Taliban commanders were detained by the United States, the American war in Afghanistan had only begun. Although most of them held high-profile positions in the Taliban regime, they had little experience in the protracted insurgency that followed the American invasion. The Taliban to which they will return looks much different from the one they were torn from.

A decade or more later, they could be seen as martyrs, buoyed by the sacrifices made for the group's cause and their role in its formation, or alternatively, perhaps as men familiar with the Taliban's new mission — the 13th year of trying to destabilize the Afghan government.

In the years that the five detainees spent at Guantanamo Bay, the Taliban mission has evolved in large and small ways, from shifts in roadside bomb construction to changes in the geography of the battlefield. It is unclear what role they might play in the current fight after they leave Qatar in 12 months.

Are their years-old al-Qaida links still relevant? Could their experience be used as a recruitment tool? U.S. officials considered those questions before the prisoner exchange, but there are no conclusive answers. Critics of the deal say the release has served as a moral victory for the Taliban at a critical time — just before next month's runoff in the presidential election and as Afghan forces look to prove their superiority over insurgents.

The little information we know about them comes from their Guantanamo case files. All of them are described as "high risk, as he may pose a threat to the U.S.,

its interests and allies."

■ **Khairkha: Said Wali Khairkha:** This 47-year-old was once the Taliban's interior minister, actually helping to create the Taliban movement in 1994. His case file, released by WikiLeaks, described him as a "hard-liner in his support of the Taliban philosophy" and as "known to have close ties to Osama bin Laden." Captured by Pakistani border patrol Feb. 16, 2002.

■ **Mullah Mohammad Fazl:** Fazl, also 47, was a senior commander in the Taliban army during the 1990s, eventually becoming its chief of staff. He is thought to have personally supervised the killing of thousands of Shiite Muslims near Kabul between 1998 and 2001. His case file also describes him as being present at a 2001 prison riot that led to the death of CIA operative Johnny Michael Spann, the first U.S. citizen killed in the Afghan War. "If released, detainees would likely rejoin the Taliban and was established with ACM (Anti-Coalition Militia) elements participating in hostilities against U.S. and Coalition forces in Afghanistan," his file reads. Fazl surrendered to a Northern Alliance commander in November 2001 and was transferred to U.S. custody in December.

■ **Mullah Norullah Noori:** Noori, 47, was a provincial governor in several areas during the Taliban regime. He is also believed to have been present during Spann's death and may also have been involved in the Shiite massacre. His case file says that he "continues to be a significant figure encouraging acts of aggression." Noori turned himself in to a Northern Alliance commander in November 2001.

■ **Abdul Haq Wasiq:** Wasiq, 43, was the deputy chief of intelligence for the Taliban. According to his case file, he "utilized his office to support al Qaeda" and was "central to the Taliban's effort to form alliances with other Islamic fundamentalist groups." Wasiq was detained in November 2001.

■ **Mohammed Nabi Omari:** Omari, 46, was a member of a joint al-Qaida-Taliban cell in eastern Khost province, according to his case file, and "one of the most significant former Taliban leaders detained" at Guantanamo. Omari was captured in September 2002.

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MILITARY

Some Bergdahl comrades call him deserter

By DAVID ZUCCHINO
Los Angeles Times

For nearly five years, Army Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl has been hailed as a hero: a prisoner of war captured while on combat duty in Afghanistan and held captive by the Taliban.

But in the days since Bergdahl's high-profile release Saturday — celebrated as “a happy day” by Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel — anger has emerged. Several fellow soldiers who were stationed with Bergdahl at Observation Post West in eastern Afghanistan insist the Idaho native is not a hero but a deserter.

Bergdahl, 28, was not taken prisoner on patrol, as some of the early versions of his capture in June 2009 seemed to imply, but voluntarily left his unit, several of the former colleagues now say. They are demanding that Bergdahl be punished for what they say was his decision to abandon his post, in their view jeopardizing the lives of soldiers who had to go looking for him.

“He walked away from his duty as an American soldier — he deserted,” Joshua Cornelison, the platoon medic, said Monday. “People are calling him a hero, and that is absolutely wrong.”

Another platoon member, Evan Butow, 27, said Bergdahl appeared to voluntarily leave the base and had spoken to fellow soldiers about “walking across the mountains on his own” or walking to India. They thought he was joking, Butow said, “but then he ends up missing, and a light goes out.”

Army officials have said their interviews with the newly freed captive will enable them to determine with some certainty what happened.

The Pentagon has always referred to Bergdahl as a prisoner of war, and Hagel did not directly answer questions about whether the Army sergeant had voluntarily left his post.

“Our first priority is assuring his well-being and his health and getting him reunited with his family. Other circumstances that may develop and questions, those will be dealt with later,” Hagel said.

Questions of how and why Bergdahl disappeared from the outpost have shadowed him during his five years in captivity, which ended when U.S. authorities negotiated a prisoner swap in which they agreed to free five Taliban commanders being held at the military detention center at Guantanamo Bay.

Now that he is free, members of his unit who obeyed orders not to discuss him have decided to tell what they know, Cornelison said.

The 30 soldiers of 2nd Platoon, Blackfoot Company regarded Bergdahl as an out-

sider, according to interviews with three former unit members and public postings and media statements by several others. He was quiet, reserved, unwilling to share the personal details other soldiers eagerly volunteered during endless hours of down time.

‘He walked away from his duty as an American soldier — he deserted. People are calling him a hero, and that is absolutely wrong.’

Joshua Cornelison
medic, 2nd
Platoon,
Blackfoot
Company

member who is now a college student in Michigan, said Bergdahl had expressed frustration with the Army and had casually wondered aloud before his disappearance what it would be like “to be left out on his own.”

Now he’s convinced that Bergdahl abandoned his unit and, like several other former platoon members, is calling for the Army to hold him legally accountable.

“He’s a deserter — 100 percent — in every definition of the word,” Butow said. “We want him to answer for that.”

Bergdahl could face a court-martial for desertion or for going absent without leave if the military determines there is sufficient evidence against him, said Eugene Fidell, who teaches military law at Yale Law School.

“We need to know more about his conduct during his period in enemy hands,” Fidell said.

The allegations of desertion have come on the heels of a heated political controversy over the Obama administration’s decision to trade the five Taliban prisoners for Bergdahl. President Barack Obama has been accused of caving in to Taliban demands and raising the ransom price for any future U.S. servicemen captured by

insurgents — and failing to properly notify Congress of the Guantanamo releases.

The allegations put the Pentagon in the position of having to decide whether to punish Bergdahl if an investigation uncovers evidence that he indeed abandoned his post in combat.

The ambiguity surrounding Bergdahl’s release was underscored Saturday at Bagram air base in Afghanistan, when Hagel triumphantly announced: “This is a happy day. We got one of our own back.” He was greeted with near silence by U.S. troops.

Bergdahl, then 23, returned from a guard shift at the outpost the night he disappeared, Cornelison said. The medic went to bed after completing his own turn at watch but was awakened by his platoon leader, who asked him, “Doc, you seen Bergdahl?”

A search of Bergdahl’s tent turned up the sergeant’s rifle, helmet, armored vest, night-vision goggles and other gear, Cornelison said. Missing was Bergdahl’s notebook and, some soldiers said, his compass.

Fellow servicemenbers said Bergdahl had spoken of walking from Afghanistan to India. Cornelison, who now lives in Sacramento, Calif., said it was an offhand comment, with Bergdahl suggesting only that it might be an interesting endeavor some day, like sailing down the Nile River.

Evan Butow
platoon member

Cornelison said he believed Bergdahl and his weapon and gear so that he could leave the post in the middle of the night without guards hearing him. When the platoon mounted a search of the area that morning, Cornelison said, they encountered a boy at a village school who said he had seen an American soldier crawling through the weeds nearby. The unit searched the area for hours, followed by countless searches of eastern Afghanistan in the coming weeks.

Radio intercepts, purportedly of conversations among insurgents and released by WikiLeaks from a trove of U.S. military documents, quoted them as saying that Bergdahl was captured unarmed while sitting on a makeshift latrine.

In 2012, Rolling Stone magazine quoted emails, never independently verified, that Bergdahl allegedly sent to his parents suggesting that he had become disillusioned with the U.S. effort in Afghanistan. The emails quoted him as saying he was “ashamed to be an American” and implied

that he was considering desertion.

On Christmas Day 2009, the Taliban released a 36-minute video in which Bergdahl criticized the U.S. military effort in Afghanistan. “This is all going to be the next Vietnam, unless the American people stand up and stop all this nonsense,” Bergdahl said.

A spokesman for coalition forces, Rear Adm. Gregory Smith, said then that Bergdahl was clearly speaking under duress. Smith condemned the Taliban “for a horrible act that exploits a young soldier.”

Bergdahl’s parents, Robert and Jani Bergdahl, have not commented on allegations that their son deserted, though in a news conference Sunday in Boise, Idaho, Bergdahl’s father’s most visible emotion came when he referred to “the Afghan people” as he addressed his son in front of television cameras.

“I’m so proud of your cultural abilities to adapt, your language skills, your desire and your action to serve this country in a very difficult, long war,” he said. “But most of all, I’m proud of how much you wanted to help the Afghan people, and what you were willing to do to go to that length.”

In Bergdahl’s hometown of Hailey, Idaho, people were aware of the allegations of desertion Monday but were focused instead on celebrating his release and making plans to welcome him back. Mayor Fritz Hammerle urged people not to “pre-judge” Bergdahl.

“There’s a lot of controversy on the Internet,” said Adam Marks, 22, a hotel worker. “People are saying he’s a traitor and that he deserted his post. But everybody here is just happy he’s coming home.”

Bergdahl is undergoing medical and psychological evaluation at a U.S. military hospital in Landstuhl, Germany. He will soon be sent for long-term therapy at a military hospital in San Antonio, according to military officials.

Only then may all the questions be answered, his fellow soldiers say.

Although Sutton said he wanted to see Bergdahl face a court-martial, he considered him a good soldier until he disappeared.

“I’d like to talk to the man and find out what was going on with him,” Sutton said. “I mean, he was my friend. I want to know.”

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Courtesy of the U.S. State Department

A building at Baghlan prison in Afghanistan is being demolished after faulty construction led to damage.

SIGAR: US-funded Afghan prison unsound, unsafe, overcrowded

By JOSH SMITH
Stars and Stripes

Less than two years after it was completed with U.S. funds, a prison in northern Afghanistan is falling apart and it's vastly overcrowded, according to a report by a Pentagon watchdog.

The Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction released a report Tuesday highlighting what it says are major safety and maintenance problems at the prison in Baghlan province.

Among those problems are damage caused by the foundation settling; a failure to use reinforced concrete; and "poor or nonexistent maintenance by Afghan government."

The prison was completed at the end of 2012 through an \$11.3 million contract awarded by the State Department's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement to an Afghan company called Omran Holding Group.

While construction was completed on time and on budget, the

damage to the buildings erupted into a dispute with the company denying any liability for the problems. SIGAR says it became apparent that the buildings had not actually been built according to basic standards.

"Information that came to light after the prison was completed indicated that (Omran) had not fully complied with all contract requirements and terms," the SIGAR report alleges. "Many of the construction deficiencies may also have been the result of fraudulent actions by the project's original contracting officer's representative — a former embassy employee — and, possibly, OHG personnel."

SIGAR accused the contractor of billing for projects including a drain water system and security fence that were never built. It said it is still investigating the extent corruption may have played in the shortfalls.

In a statement, the U.S. Embassy in Kabul said the State Department was already taking

steps to fix the problems and that SIGAR was aware and supportive of those efforts.

"Before the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction conducted its investigation into the Baghlan prison project, we identified and were addressing serious deficiencies in construction," said embassy spokeswoman Heather Eaton. "The department recognizes the concerns of SIGAR regarding Baghlan prison construction. We are committed to proper oversight of projects in Afghanistan and to work collaboratively with SIGAR in safeguarding U.S. taxpayer investment."

The prison, like many facilities in Afghanistan, is situated in a potentially active earthquake zone, further exacerbating the safety concerns. While the prison was designed to hold 495 inmates, it has been housing as many 777 people, according to the report.

smith.josh@stripes.com
Twitter: @joshjonesmith

Competing plans on VA issues take shape in Senate

By Ed O'KEEFE
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — Senators are expected to turn attention this week to competing plans to revamp the Department of Veterans Affairs following the resignation of Secretary Eric Shinseki.

With Shinseki's quick departure last week, it could take Congress weeks, if not months, to sort out how to help the beleaguered department address delayed appointments, mismanaged care and a sustained backlog of requests for benefits.

Democrats are rallying around a comprehensive proposal by Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee Chairman Bernie Sanders, I-Vt. His Restoring Veterans' Trust Act would give the VA secretary the authority to remove senior officials based on poor job performance, grant the department expedited hiring authority for nurses and doctors, authorize it to lease 27 new facilities in 18 states and Puerto Rico, and make several other changes.

Senate Democrats also have not ruled out quickly passing a measure that would make it easier for the VA secretary to fire or demote senior managers found responsible for mismanaged or delayed care, according to senior aides familiar with potential plans. A similar measure easily passed the House almost two weeks ago.

Other Democrats are urging bolder action. Rep. Tulsi Gabbard, D-Hawaii, an Iraq combat veteran, on Monday wrote to President Barack Obama urging him to use executive powers to immediately permit veterans to access medical care outside the VA system, if necessary.

"To make any veteran wait for medical care is not only an emergency, it is a travesty," she wrote.

On Tuesday, Republican senators are planning to announce the Veterans Choice Act, which would allow veterans to seek medical appointments outside the VA system under certain conditions.

Members of the Veterans' Affairs Committee will hold a hearing on the Sanders measure Thursday. In an interview late

last week as he was finalizing his proposal, Sanders said that he supports the idea of making it easier to punish poor-performing managers but that he wants to ensure that it would not lead to the politicization of the department.

"The nightmare could be under the current bill that passed the House, that a new president comes in and they fire hundreds of high-ranking VA officials without due process or particular reason," Sanders said.

"I think you cannot run a health-care system the size of the VA like that. You want to be able to get rid of people at the VA who are incompetent in a very rapid way, but you have to have due process."

Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt.
Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee

The Sanders bill also addresses a host of issues not directly raised by recent allegations that led to Shinseki's exit. His measure would expand dental care for veterans, restore full cost-of-living adjustments for military retirement pensions, provide assistance to veterans who are sexually assaulted or raped while serving, and require advance, multiyear appropriations for VA operations. In the House, several of those issues have been part of smaller bills that have passed in recent months.

Details of the Senate GOP proposal were unclear Monday, but House Veterans' Affairs Committee Chairman Jeff Miller, R-Fla., is also working on legislation that would allow VA-eligible veterans to seek care outside the system if they have to wait more than 30 days to seek medical treatment. The idea is popular among members of both parties.

DOD: Russia buzzed US spy plane in April

Stars and Stripes

In a Cold War-style confrontation, a Russian fighter got too close for comfort to a U.S. electronic reconnaissance plane in late April, prompting complaints to Russian officials from top U.S. military officials.

"On the afternoon of April 23, a U.S. Air Force RC-135U flying in international airspace on a routine mission over the Sea of Okhotsk was intercepted by a single

Russian Su-27 Flanker," Pentagon spokesman Col. Steve Warren told reporters Tuesday. "The Su-27 approached the RC-135 across the nose of the US aircraft within approximately 100 feet."

There was no radio communication between the two aircraft, but the Russian jet rolled to expose its armaments to the crew of the U.S. jet, Warren said. The RC-135U's pilots did not need to engage in evasive maneuvers, Warren said.

Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff both "communicated our concerns over that incident directly to the Russian military," Warren said.

Warren said he was aware of no other close encounters since, and routine military flights continue over the Sea of Okhotsk, which lies off Russia's east coast, north of Japan.

"We are continuing to conduct our normal operations," he said.

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D-DAY REMEMBERED

US troops head to France for D-Day events

By MATT MILLHAM
Stars and Stripes

KAISERSLAUTERN, Germany — In what has come to be something of a tradition this time of year, the American military is again preparing to invade Normandy.

The U.S. is sending roughly 650 troops from across the U.S. and Europe to take part in more than two dozen events commemorating the 70th anniversary of D-Day, the start of the Allied invasion that led to Germany's defeat in World War II.

Soldiers from at least eight U.S.-based units will serve as color guards and speakers at commemorations in towns and places that their predecessors fought in or liberated in the early days of the Allied invasion, according to U.S. European Command. Among the stateside units represented are the 82nd and 101st Airborne Divisions; the 75th Ranger Regiment; the 1st, 4th and 29th Infantry Divisions; the 1st Battalion, 507th Parachute Infantry Regiment; and 4th Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, which traces its lineage back to the 1st Battalion, 501st Parachute Infantry Regiment.

Troops from some of those units and others from Europe will reenact one of the most heroic and harrowing events of the invasion: parachuting out of planes in a massive, multinational jump on June 8.

Local villages and organizations will stage hundreds of events before and after the jump, from fireworks and movie screenings to concerts and parades.

The U.S. military is sending troops to just a few dozen of these events, the biggest of them a ceremony June 6 at the Normandy American Cemetery, where nearly 11,000 American dead and missing are memorialized, to honor the Americans who fought and died in the Normandy campaign. Some 200 American servicemembers will take part in the ceremony, including an honor guard from the Europe-based 529th Military Police salute battery, paratroopers from the 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team and a flight of F-15s, which will fly in a missing man formation.

"We'll have flyovers on a lot of

Normandy schedule of events

The U.S. is sending roughly 650 troops to France from across the U.S. and Europe to take part in more than two dozen events commemorating the 70th anniversary of D-Day. Here are some of the events the U.S. is attending and the participating units.

June 4

10 a.m. Gourbeville: 82nd Airborne Division
11:30 a.m. Amfreville: 82nd Airborne Division
2:30 p.m. Amfreville: 82nd Airborne Division
4 p.m. Gueutville: 82nd Airborne Division
5 p.m. Carentan: 101st Airborne Division

June 5

10 a.m. Picauville: Roughly 200, led by U.S. Air Force, personnel
2 p.m. Chef du Pont: 101st Airborne Division
2 p.m. Pointe du Hoc: 75th Ranger Regiment
4 p.m. Ste.-Mère-Église: 82nd Airborne Division
5 p.m. Colleville-sur-Mer: 1st Infantry Division
5 p.m. Montebourg: 4th Infantry Division
8 p.m. Utah Beach: U.S. Coast Guard Color Guard and Navy Europe Band
11 p.m. St. Laurent: U.S. Army Europe Band

June 6

10:30 a.m. Normandy American Cemetery: About 200 personnel from

various units; color guard from 529th Military Police; flyover by U.S. F-15s
3 p.m. Negreville: 82nd Airborne Division
3:30 p.m. Ste.-Mère-Église: 101st Airborne Division
5 p.m. Vierville-sur-Mer: 29th Infantry Division
7 p.m. Picauville: 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team

June 7

10:30 a.m. Angoville au Plain: 4th Brigade, 25th Infantry Division
10 a.m. DeGlopper Memorial, La Fière: 82nd Infantry Division
11 a.m. Bois du Limors: 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team
3 p.m. St. Lô: 1st Infantry Division
3:30 p.m. Pointe du Hoc: 75th Ranger Regiment
5 p.m. La Haje de Puit: 4th Infantry Division
5:30 p.m. Gaignes: 101st Infantry Division

June 8

11 a.m. La Fière drozzone (multinational airborne drop): About 400 American paratroops; a mix of all airborne units plus 10 American C-130s and other French, German and Dutch aircraft

More coverage of the 70th anniversary of D-Day, including photos, visitor information, an interactive map and videos stripes.com/normandy

the ceremonies," U.S. European Command spokesman John Tomassi said. "Not every one, but I would say a good majority of them."

U.S. participation in many of the events will be modest, though the units attending will have symbolic significance. In one, about 25 soldiers from the 82nd Airborne Division will attend a ceremony at a memorial honoring Pfc. Charles DeGlopper, an 82nd soldier who died in the battle to take La Fière Bridge and was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

Army Rangers will again stand at Pointe du Hoc, where their predecessors scaled the cliffs to seize the high ground where German

forces had huge gun emplacements. In Colleville-sur-Mer, where there is a large monument to the 1st Infantry Division, soldiers of the Big Red One will join locals in paying their respects. The 101st will have soldiers in Chef du Pont, where it was once tasked with seizing a strategic bridge.

U.S. European Command doesn't yet have a final list of events in Normandy where American forces will be present in an official capacity, but a preliminary list is available on its website, www.eucm.mil. A more comprehensive calendar of events is available at dday-overlord.com, a nonprofit organization.



PHOTOS BY MICHAEL ABRAMS/Stars and Stripes

A monument on the road between Utah Beach and Sainte-Marie-du-Mont is, as its plaque says, dedicated to those who led the way on D-Day, and depicts Maj. Richard Winters, commander of "Easy" Company, i.e. the "Band of Brothers."



The Ranger Memorial at Pointe du Hoc as seen through the opening of a German gun position.

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Post allowance restored for Korea-based workers

By ASHLEY ROWLAND
Stars and Stripes

SEOUL — The U.S. government has restored the post allowance for Korea-based workers to 20 percent of spendable income after the cost-of-living adjustment was suddenly eliminated last month.

The move was effective June 1, and also is being applied for the pay periods ending May 17 and 31.

The military and the government have not explained why the allowance was cut or why the decision was reversed so quickly. The State Department's website said only that the change is based on an "administrative increase."

U.S. Forces Korea issued a brief statement Tuesday announcing the change but would not answer further questions.

Based on two recent letters from USFK commander Gen. Curtis Scaparrotti to civilian employees, the cut appeared to be linked to a recent State Department survey that determined post allowance rates. In a May 16 letter, the commander said the survey did not include Department of De-

"I and others were certainly upset. ... However, most of us also did not bother to 'fight the good fight' because we've become resigned to being the lowest priority."

a Defense Department civilian employee on post allowance cuts

fense civilians, and assured them that he was making the issue a priority.

"I am very concerned about the effect this will have on you and your families," the letter said.

A DOD civilian employee who contacted Stars and Stripes said he received an email from the Army on May 24 stating, "The decrease of post allowance occurred based on the results of a Retail Price Survey conducted by embassy personnel in Seoul, Korea. The primary reason for the reduction, according to the [State Department], was based on the relatively low price of goods reported for the commissary on post and the results of a Living Pattern Questionnaire that indicated most employees conduct their shopping on post

rather than off post."

That email was the only notification the civilian employee received about the cut in post allowance. The employee's co-workers also did not receive notification from USFK about the cut.

The employee said the post allowance cut, had it remained in place, would have meant a \$7,000 annual drop in pay.

"I and others were certainly upset. ... However, most of us also did not bother to 'fight the good fight' because we've become resigned to being the lowest priority," the employee said. "On a good day, support for civilians here is weak, at best. Following renegeing on LQA, sequestration, furlough, and ongoing mismanagement of civilian positions and resources, most of us didn't

think it was worth the effort. I don't know of anyone willing to quit over this, but I have heard more than once that a civilian employee is looking to leave USFK as soon as possible, and this was just one more straw on the camel's back."

Post allowance had been set at 15 percent to 20 percent this year. Post allowance is given to U.S. civilian employees stationed overseas in a location where the cost of living is substantially higher than in Washington, D.C., allowing foreign-based employees to spend the same portion of their basic compensation for living expenses without seeing a reduction in their living standards.

In a letter issued Monday, Scaparrotti said the State Department would conduct another survey, probably in mid-June, that will include all government employees.

"All employees are encouraged to participate in the survey as the data it generates will adjust the (post allowance) rate in Korea accordingly," he said. "You have a chance to be heard. Make it count."

rowland.ashley@stripes.com

3 soldiers accused of inappropriate behavior at Korean water park

By ASHLEY ROWLAND
AND YOO KYONG CHANG
Stars and Stripes

SEOUL — Two 2nd Infantry Division soldiers have been accused of inappropriately touching female employees of a popular Korean water park, where South Korean riot police were summoned after another worker was allegedly punched and kicked while trying to intervene.

South Korean police said there were three Camp Casey-based soldiers who were drunk and had been causing a disturbance at the Everland theme park, south of Seoul, starting at around 11:30 a.m. Saturday. The soldiers were shooting at least one water pistol

filled with alcohol at other patrons and stealing their food, police said.

The soldiers were in the park's Caribbean Bay attraction around 1:10 p.m. when they began smoking. A female employee was guiding them to a designated smoking area when one soldier touched her shoulder, waist and back, according to the Yongin Dongbu Police chief of criminal affairs.

Police said a second soldier gave a worker at the park's information desk a high-five but refused to let go of her hand, told her she was "sexy" and, while moving his hips or buttocks, while the first soldier made a remark she believed was sexual in

nature and humiliated her.

A male employee tried to intervene, but the soldiers punched him in the face and kicked him. They also refused to follow orders from South Korean police who were called to the scene, punching one officer and spitting in his face, police said.

The confrontation ended after two police patrol cars and riot police arrived, police said.

Army officials identified the

soldiers as a private, a private first class, and a specialist with the 210th Field Artillery Brigade, but did not release their names. The Army would not provide further details about the incident, saying it was still under investigation by U.S. and South Korean authorities.

A 21D statement quoted brigade commander Col. Michael Lawson as saying the unit "does not condone or tolerate misconduct," and

promised full cooperation with South Korean police.

Korean police said the soldiers denied any misbehavior and were turned over to the U.S. military at 4 a.m. Sunday because they requested legal assistance. Police said they plan to ask they be returned for questioning Tuesday.

No charges have been filed.

rowland.ashley@stripes.com
chang.yookyong@stripes.com

Body of Marine captain found in barracks room

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — The Naval Criminal Investigative Service is looking into the death of a Marine who was found in his barracks room Saturday night at Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni.

Capt. Garrett Woodcock, 31, of

Riverside, Calif., was found dead in his barracks room at approximately 7 p.m., according to a Marine Corps statement. No other details were available Monday.

Woodcock was a member of Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 122, which is temporarily assigned to Japan from Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort, S.C.

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NATION

Seattle approves \$15 minimum wage

By DONNA GORDON
BLANKSHIP
The Associated Press

SEATTLE — Seattle activists celebrated a successful campaign to gradually increase the city's minimum wage to \$15 by calling for a national movement to close the income and opportunity gaps between rich and poor.

The Seattle City Council unanimously passed an ordinance Monday that would give the city the highest minimum wage in the nation.

Seattle City Council member Kshama Sawant said the push for a higher minimum wage is spreading across the nation.

The minimum wage issue has dominated politics in the liberal municipality for months, and a boisterous crowd of mostly labor activists packed the council chambers for the vote.

Mayor Ed Murray, who was elected last year, had promised in his campaign to raise the minimum wage to \$15 an hour, as did Sawant in her campaign last year.

"We did it. Workers did this," Sawant said. "We need to continue to build an even more powerful movement."

The International Franchise Association, a Washington, D.C.-based business group that represents franchise owners, said it plans to sue to stop the ordinance, calling it "unfair, discriminatory and a deliberate attempt to achieve a political agenda at the expense of small-franchise business owners."

Effective April 1, 2015, the measure includes a phase-in of the wage increase over several years, with a slower process for small businesses.

Businesses with more than 500 employees nationally will have at least three years to phase in the increase.

Those providing health insurance will have four years to complete the move. Smaller organizations will be given seven years.

San Francisco currently has the nation's highest hourly minimum wage at \$10.74.



TED S. WARREN/AP

Caitlyn Faircloth, an employee of Molly Moon's Homemade Ice Cream, hands out free ice cream on Monday at a rally celebrating the passage of a \$15 minimum wage measure outside Seattle City Hall.

NRA describes 'open carry' rallies as 'downright weird'

By JUAN A. LOZANO
The Associated Press

HOUSTON — Companies, customers and others critical of Texas gun rights advocates who have brought military-style assault rifles into businesses as part of demonstrations supporting "open carry" gun rights now have a surprising ally: the National Rifle Association.

The gun rights advocates' actions in restaurants and other public places — part of a push for less restrictive gun laws, including legalizing the open carry of handguns — have prompted public criticism.

The NRA has long been a zealous advocate for gun owners' rights. But the group's lobbying arm, the Institute for Legislative Action, has called the "open carry" demonstrations counterproductive to promoting gun rights, scary and

"downright weird."

The NRA said the demonstrations have "crossed the line from enthusiasm to downright foolishness."

"Using guns merely to draw attention to yourself in public not only defies common sense, it shows a lack of consideration and manners. That's not the Texas way. And that's certainly not the NRA way," the NRA said in a statement posted on its website Friday.

The president and vice president of Open Carry Texas, one of the groups behind the recent demonstrations, did not return emails seeking comment late Monday.

But in a statement posted on its Facebook page, Open Carry Texas criticized the NRA, saying if the group doesn't retract its comments, Open Carry will have to withdraw its full support for the NRA.



TONY GUTIERREZ/AP

A Texas flag sticks out of the barrel of a rifle belonging to Robert Perez as he and others with the group Open Carry Tarrant County gather for a demonstration Thursday in Haltom City, Texas.

White House seeks delay in DOD immigration plan

By JIM KUHNHENN
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The White House has asked the Department of Defense to delay a plan that would allow some immigrants who entered the U.S. illegally as children to obtain a limited path to citizenship by serving in the military.

The decision to postpone the narrowly drawn proposal is part of the White House effort to put off any immigration-related executive actions until August in the hope that House Republicans act on legislation to overhaul the immigration system in the next two months.

White House officials have said they don't want to hurt those chances by taking executive branch actions that would anger congressional Republicans. The

Senate has already passed broad immigration legislation.

"The president is convinced there is a legislative opportunity, and that gives us the best opportunity to fix what's broken in our immigration system," White House spokesman Bobby Whitthorne said Monday. "He wants to leave no stone unturned to make sure the House takes that opportunity, follows the Senate's lead and takes action."

The plan under consideration by the Pentagon would apply to immigrants who arrived illegally as children but already have received work permits and relief from deportation under a program President Barack Obama announced two years ago, called Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA. More than 500,000 immigrants have benefited from the program.



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WORLD

American suicide bomber in Syria raises fears

As more US citizens join fight, officials worry if they'll pose a threat once back home

By GREG MILLER, ADAM GOLDMAN
AND NICOLE RODRIGUEZ
The Washington Post

As Moner Mohammad Abusalha packed explosives into a truck last month to embark on a suicide attack, his family in Florida was apparently unaware that he had even wandered into Syria's civil war.

For months he had been sending emails indicating he was in Jordan, possibly caring for the wounded but far from the fight. "I'm here now, doing fine," the emails would say, according to Taher Husainy, a family friend in Vero Beach. "I'm here for a good cause, doing good things."

American counterterrorism agencies were only slightly better informed. U.S. officials said they knew Abusalha had crossed into Syria, but they had scant intelligence on his activities there or associations with an al-Qaida affiliate until he appeared last week in an online martyrdom video.

The inability to track Abusalha reflects what U.S. officials describe as a worrisome blind spot for intelligence agencies struggling to monitor a surging flow of foreign fighters into and out of a conflict dominated by Islamist militants.

U.S. officials said that dozens of fighters from the United States, and much larger numbers from Europe and the Middle East, all but disappear from view once they are inside Syria's borders.

"It's a bit of a black hole," one U.S. counterterrorism official said. "We don't have a lot of it from inside Syria."

U.S. officials described Syria as a daunting environment for espionage. The CIA

pulled its people out of Syria when the U.S. Embassy was closed as the conflict moved toward civil war. There are also legal impediments to tracking U.S. citizens or monitoring their communications.

Amid estimates that as many as 12,000 foreigners have flocked to Syria, the opaque nature of the conflict has complicated efforts to determine how many might have become dangerously radicalized or to account for them if and when they return home.

Abusalha's demise was greeted by some U.S. counterterrorism officials with a measure of relief that U.S. citizen and willing suicide bomber had carried out his attack far from the country where he lived.

The outcome was seen as evidence that Jabhat al-Nusra, the al-Qaida-linked group that asserted responsibility for the attack, remains focused on ousting Syrian President Bashar Assad rather than taking advantage of an American recruit to launch a plot against the West.

Even so, U.S. officials acknowledged that the full extent of Abusalha's transformation — his grooming by Jabhat al-Nusra and willingness to take part in a suicide attack — might be eluded U.S. agencies even if they were in a position to spot any attempt to leave Syria.

A U.S. law enforcement official said that

as many as a dozen Americans who have traveled to Syria since the outset of war there have been investigated or scrutinized since returning to the United States. Among the Americans who have traveled to Syria are prison and online convicts to the cause, according to a U.S. official.

Abusalha was not known to have ever espoused violence toward the United States or been linked to any terrorist plot, meaning there may have been no cause to detain him if he had chosen to return. His death, against the backdrop of that prospect, has heightened concern.

"It's a game-changer," said Martin Rendon, who worked on FBI counterterrorism assignments for a decade before retiring in 2011. "It drives home the threat of foreign fighters. What happens when they go home?"

Abusalha was known as a devout Muslim among his friends and high school classmates. His mother often wore a traditional Islamic head scarf in their Vero Beach neighborhood, according to Mark Hill, who said he has lived around the corner from the family since 2006.

"They're very good, very happy, very friendly people," Hill said. Abusalha was an avid basketball player, often seen dribbling around the neighborhood.

Abusalha attended classes at Indian River State College in Fort Pierce in 2010 and 2011, taking preparatory classes for physical therapy, according to college officials. He later transferred to Seminole State College of Florida and was last enrolled in 2012.

When he left the United States within

the past several months, U.S. officials said, his departure was abrupt, and he appears to have kept his itinerary a secret.

Only weeks later did he send a note to his family saying he was in Jordan, his father's ancestral home. The family continued to get cryptic emails saying, "I'm fine, I'm OK. I'm alive," Husainy said.

Abusalha surfaced intermittently on social networking sites, leaving clues to his evolving beliefs, according to the SITE Intelligence Group, which monitors online Islamist postings.

Images loaded to a Facebook account in 2012 and 2013 show green birds, a motif associated with Islamist martyrs, according to the group. Those online postings might have drawn the attention of U.S. law enforcement agencies, which monitor hundreds of websites as part of an effort to identify and track foreign fighters.

It took days for U.S. officials to confirm that Abusalha had taken part in the bombing depicted on a video posted last week by Jabhat al-Nusra. The footage includes an image of Abusalha smiling and cradling a cat, a pose used by the al-Qaida affiliate to send a reassuring message to would-be recruits. The video shows fighters packing a heavily armored truck, then rolling toward a hilltop compound that is destroyed moments later in a massive explosion.

Earlier this year, Director of National Intelligence James Clapper testified that Jabhat al-Nusra has "aspirations for attacks on the homeland" and that al-Qaida groups have established camps "to train people to go back to their countries."



Abusalha

Brussels arrest shows Europe's challenge in tracking extremists

By ELAINE GANLEY
The Associated Press

PARIS — The suspect in the recent killings at the Jewish Museum in Brussels provides a textbook example of a longstanding fear in the West — the threat posed by radicalized citizens returning from the battlefields of Syria.

Since Syria became a magnet for Westerners, European nations have been slowly fortifying themselves with measures to detect potential jihadi fighters and counter any plots. But French-born Mehdi Nemmouche, who has spent seven years behind bars, has been radicalized in prison, Paris Prosecutor Francois Molins said in announcing the arrest.

Between 1,000 and 1,500 Europeans may currently be fighting in Syria against President Bashar Assad, according to Charles Lister, an analyst with Brookings Doha Center, who drew the estimate from governments and other sources. Each one who returns represents a potential threat, according to official European thinking, and the challenge to track them all is huge. The arrest of the French suspect in the Belgian attack also opens the possibility that a returnee could choose to attack a country other

large supply of ammunition and a banner of Syria's most notorious fighting group, the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant.

They added that his camera contained a video showing weapons and clothes appearing to match those of the killer in the furious minute-long May 24 museum attack, which left three people dead and one seriously injured. A voice said the video was made because a camera to broadcast the killings live failed to function.

Nemmouche, who has spent seven years behind bars, has been radicalized in prison, Paris Prosecutor Francois Molins said in announcing the arrest.

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A man stops to pay his respects prior to a service for the three victims of a shooting at the Jewish Museum in Brussels, on Monday. The suspect arrested by police was a French-born man who had fought alongside extremists in Syria, police said.

than his homeland. Thomas Hegghammer, an expert on foreign fighters at the Norwegian Defense Research Establishment, says that attacks by one person are far harder to thwart than large-scale operations.

European governments "are quite well positioned to thwart larger plots involving several people," Hegghammer said. "They're not able to stop all the smaller, simpler attacks like the one in Brussels, with one person and a gun."

In its annual report issued last month, The EU's police organization Europol said radicals who travel to fight alongside militants in conflicts like the Syrian civil war are "posing an increased threat to all EU member states on their return."

A leading French criminologist who advised former President Nicolas Sarkozy said that a lack of coordination and data-sharing among nations — even within the EU — stunts measures to counter

the threat.

"The task is not impossible," said Alain Bauer. "You need greater and better coordination."

A major issue, he said, is that nations are concerned that sharing information will endanger sources.

Bauer underscored the importance of catching the traveler before he embarks. And this means "early intelligence, early warning, early detection. That is something we don't do," he said.

VIRGINIA MATO/AP

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EDITORIAL

Terry Leonard, Editorial Director
leonard.terry@stripes.com
Robert H. Reid, Senior Managing Editor
reid.robert@stripes.com
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Tina Croley, Enterprise Editor
croley.tina@stripes.com

BUREAU STAFF

Europe/Mideast
Teddie Weyr, News Editor/Europe/Mideast
weyr.teddie@stripes.com
+49(0)631.3615.9310; cell
+49(0)173.315.1881; DSN (314)583.9310

Pacific
Paul Alexander, News Editor Pacific
alexander.paul@stripes.com
+81-3 6385.5377; cell (080)5883.1673
DSN (315)225.5377

Washington
Patrick Dickson, Washington Bureau Chief
dickson.patrick@stripes.com
(+1)703.693.6957; DSN (312)223.6957
Brian Bowers, Assistant Managing Editor, News
bowers.brian@stripes.com
Joe Gromelski, Assistant Managing Editor, Web
gromelski.joe@stripes.com
Sean Moores, Assistant Managing Editor, Sports, Features and Graphics
moores.sean@stripes.com

CONTACT US

Washington
tel: (+1)202.761.0900; DSN (312)763.0900;
fax: (+1)202.761.0890
529 14th Street NW, Suite 350, Washington, DC
20045-1301

Reader letters
letters@stripes.com

Additional contacts
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OPINION

Violence always leads to cultural debates

By RICH HELDENFELS
Akron (Ohio) Beacon Journal

The recent shootings in Isla Vista, Calif., have led to a sadly familiar cultural conversation. After the initial shock, the question of why such things happen sends people theorizing about the roots of violence in the culture, followed rather swiftly by a backlash (or, in the more common current parlance, pushback) against the theorizing. In the end, people are as polarized and puzzled as ever. And the culture moves on.

You may be thinking that I am talking about the debate about guns that accompanies the all too frequent massacres in this country. But the debates can go far beyond that.

Ann Hornaday, film critic for The Washington Post, wrote after the shootings that Elliot Rodger's "delusions were inflated, if not created, by the entertainment industry he grew up in. With his florid rhetoric of self-pity, aggression and awkwardly forced 'evil laugh,' Rodger resembled a noxious caricature between Christian Bale's slick sociopath in 'American Psycho,' the thwarted womanizer in James Toback's 'The Pick-Up Artist' and every Bond villain in the canon."

Then she asked: "How many students watch outsized frat-boy fantasies like 'Neighbors' and feel, as Rodger did, unjustly shut out of college life that should be full of 'sex and fun and pleasure'? How many men, raised on a steady diet of Judd Apatow comedies in which the shlubby arrested adolescent always gets the girl, find that those happy endings constantly elude them and conclude, 'It's not fair?'"

Misinformed? Apatow and Seth Rogen, who starred in "Neighbors" and is the archetype of the movie shlub, were enraged. Rogen, for one, called Hornaday's piece "horribly insulting and misinformed." He later added:

"How dare you imply that me getting girls in movies caused a lunatic to go on a rampage." Hornaday followed up, saying she did not blame the movies for Rodger's actions but "there's no doubt [movies] powerfully condition what we desire and feel we deserve from it."

And she said, we need to consider "questions about sexism, insecurity and entitlement, how they've threaded their way through an entertainment culture historically dominated by men and how they've shaped our own expectations as individuals and a culture."

After all, Rodger's actions are not only a reason to consider what men do, but also what happens to women when they run afoul of rampant misogyny.

Which brings us to the most prominent cultural reaction to Isla Vista: #YesAllWomen on Twitter.

It has been an attempt to point out that Rodger's rage against women was not an isolated incident but part of a larger pattern of women experiencing harassment, insult and various kinds of attacks. (The tag, as CNN noted, was a reaction to the claim that "not all men" are bad. Even if they aren't, all women have been targeted in some way.)

Not surprisingly, the hashtag resonated. As Emily Shire wrote in the Daily Beast, it "led to an outpouring of simultaneously enlightening and disturbing examples of common-day occurrences of female harassment in the workplace and the world of dating."

Also unsurprisingly, Shire went on to worry that #YesAllWomen had lost its voice. For starters, it turned the "highly disturbed, socially isolated" Rodger into a representative of mass misogyny based on his words, when "we don't know what exactly drove a 'deranged 22-year-old' to violence."

At the same time, Shire feared that #YesAllWomen was being attacked to far

more trivial issues than those raised by the shootings and the conversation about women.

Does a discussion about women's body images in TV sitcoms "really belong in a discussion about mass murder?" Shire asked.

And to that I say, as I do to Ann Hornaday, that yes, we need to talk about these things. Hornaday's reference to shlubby men is part and parcel with what one critic dubbed "male pattern optimism": television series' pairing of ordinary-looking men with exceedingly attractive women. Culture is not about single incidents, even ones as horrible as the Isla Vista shootings, but about the way ideas and attitudes permeate art, entertainment and argument. All of that affects how people, especially the young and easily influenced, think about the world.

It is not, and should not be, the only influence. There should be other material offering a counterweight. There should be people in our lives challenging and testing cultural ideas, forcing us to ask about what we see but to think carefully about it. But that does not mean we ignore the implications of the ideas presented to us. Hornaday's argument is worth discussing. While #YesAllWomen may have some trivial tweets — what topic doesn't these days — it also demands the kind of attention cultural ideas far beyond 140 characters and a hashtag.

We are not a culture free of sexism. I keep thinking of the recent case of an Indiana woman, drugged and raped repeatedly by her then-husband.

When the man was convicted of his crimes, the judge reportedly asked his ex-forgive him, and sentenced the rapist not to jail but to a long period of house arrest.

Yes, all women.

Rich Heldenfels writes about popular culture for the Beacon Journal and Ohio.com.

Congress long past point of harmless inaction

By DAN K. THOMASSON
McClatchy-Tribune News Service

THE humorist said of Calvin Coolidge, "He didn't do anything, but that is exactly what we wanted done." In 1948, Harry Truman won his own term in the White House by railing against the do-nothingness of the Congress controlled by the Republicans.

That easily could be repeated about both the current president and most of the Congress. The 21st Capitol Hill is in big trouble. Faced with an intransigent Republican majority in the lower chamber and not much of a Democratic majority in the Senate, Barack Obama seems paralyzed by his own inability to game the system, relying largely on Coolidge-like appearances (sans war bonnets or a big fish) with school kids and statements to the public from the bully pulpit.

He seems destined to be preserved in history mainly as the first African-American to win the job with a nod for bringing health insurance to millions of Americans who didn't have it previously (and the verdict is still out on that). His lofty goals of 2008 and '12 will remain unfulfilled unless by a miracle he could gain back what his

party lost in 2010, the House, and maintain the narrow hold on Senate. Republicans may lose a seat or two in the House but not control and the Democratic fortunes in the upper chamber remain vulnerable at this point partly because of the president's unpopularity.

Once again, the major problems facing the nation from immigration to energy to tax reform to climate change most likely will have to wait for another administration. And the odds of success for the next person in the White House are long under the current atmosphere on the Hill. Congress has taken on the characteristics of a failed institution with mediocre leadership from both parties. The list of put-off "to do" things get longer every week. Fewer and fewer bills are being introduced and less and less time is being spent in session.

If the House majority leader's calendar for the year holds true, the "statesmen" we elect to oversee our well-being will come to together officially only 112 of about 264 working (excuse the expression) days this year. That number could plunge to zero in a weekend session or two, which could only be in a crisis. Statistics provided by The New York Times the other day showed that there were 18 percent fewer bills introduced through May than last year's number.

That might not be such a bad thing considering the fact large numbers of its members seem more interested in ideological purity than a sensible approach to legislation. As W. J. Rogers said all these years ago, Congress might be the largest collec-

tion of comedians in history — every time they tell a joke it becomes a law. While that might be a bit extreme, it clearly depicts today's atmosphere.

It has been years since the essentials of providing the wherewithal for running the government have been accomplished in regular order. Appropriations are not handled and individual bills but are assigned to continuing resolutions that are omnibus in nature and full of waste in fact. At the end of each legislative year, the congressional hands dip into the taxpayer's pockets and out come the bills to hang on a Christmas tree full of goodies designed to raise campaign funds and preserve incumbency.

The costs of the latter have become so extraordinarily high that much of those days out of session are spent hustling for bucks, in fact. All this once again testifies to the accuracy that we have the best Congress money can buy.

How do we solve the problem of a democracy so imbued with a culture of self-preservation that it is feeding on itself? We probably can't. Doing nothing may be just the way of life we have brought upon ourselves by not paying more attention to the quality of those we elect to public office. There may be some solace in the fact that when they're not doing anything, they aren't doing any harm. But inaction is good only to a point. We long ago reached that.

Dan Thomasson is an op-ed columnist for McClatchy-Tribune and a former vice president of Scripps Howard Newspapers.

OPINION

Debates aside, be glad Bergdahl is safe

BY ROBIN ABCARIAN
Los Angeles Times

The backlash against the Obama administration prisoner exchange (five high-ranking Taliban prisoners at Guantanamo Bay for one American Army sergeant who has been shuttled between Afghanistan and Pakistan) appears to be unfolding on two fronts: the personal and the political.

The personal attack is aimed at 23-year-old Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl by fellow soldiers who, free to speak now that Bergdahl has been released, say the soldier, who was then a private first class, voluntarily walked off his post in 2009, indirectly causing the deaths of at least six soldiers who tried to retrieve him.

"Bergdahl was a deserter and soldiers from his own unit died trying to track him down," writes Nathan Bradley Bethea, who served in the same battalion as Bergdahl and participated in some of those rescue efforts. Bergdahl should not, Bethea insists, be treated as a hero.

That assault dovetails with the political assault against the prisoner swap that is picking up steam among conservatives, especially among congressional Republicans. They say the Obama administration did not give Congress a required 30-day notice before transferring prisoners from Guantanamo Bay. Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel said Sunday on "Meet the Press" that he and his staff had acted quickly, as Bergdahl's "safety and health" were at risk.

While politicians of both parties express joy and relief that America's only known prisoner of war is coming home, Republicans insist the swap will only embolden the threat to take American lives. House Republicans have already announced they will investigate.

Republican Sen. John McCain, the only member of Congress to have been a prisoner of war, has been an especially harsh critic. On Sunday, on "Face the Nation," the Arizona senator criticized the swap, describing the five Guantanamo prisoners as "the hardest of the hard core" and "the highest high-risk people," warning that they could "re-enter the fight."

But McCain's outrage is somewhat disin-



Rachel Malone, 17, ties balloons along Main Street in Hailey, Idaho, on Saturday after the announcement that Army Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl has been released from captivity.

genous. He has known for more than two years that the United States was negotiating a swap. (The freed prisoners are to live under some form of house arrest in Qatar rather than be returned to Afghanistan.)

According to the late Michael Hastings, who wrote a long profile of Bergdahl for Rolling Stone in June 2012, administration officials had briefed "a handful of senators," including McCain, on their efforts to trade five Taliban prisoners for Bergdahl in January 2012.

"McCain reluctantly came around on the prisoner exchange, according to those present at the meeting," wrote Hastings, "but he has continued to speak out against negotiating with the Taliban." (The 2012 swap fell through, Hastings reported, after the Taliban balked at some of the conditions of the release.)

We'll be learning more about the circumstances of Bergdahl's capture in the coming days and weeks. Clearly, there is

confusion about how to think about him. The Drudge Report on Monday morning captured the ambivalence with a banner headline accompanying a photo of Bergdahl: "Hero Deserter?"

The Taliban, and Bergdahl, have an obvious interest in portraying his disappearance in Afghanistan as involuntary. In a 2009 video of Bergdahl released by the Taliban, the then-23-year-old soldier says, "I was lagging behind a patrol when I was captured."

The Army, of course, has every interest in dispelling the idea that one of its own was kidnapped. Hastings described Bergdahl's 2009 disappearance as voluntary flight by a soldier disillusioned with the American mission in Afghanistan, and the callous way he felt U.S. soldiers treated Afghan civilians.

As Hastings wrote:

"In the early morning hours of June 30, according to soldiers in the unit, Bowe ap-

proached his team leader not long after he got off guard duty and asked his superiors a simple question: If I were to leave the base, would it cause problems if I took my sensitive equipment?"

"Yes, his team leader responded — if you took your rifle and night-vision goggles, that would cause problems."

"Bowe returned to his barracks, a roughly built bunker of plywood and sandbags. He gathered up water, a knife, his digital camera and his diary. Then he slipped off the outpost."

In his remarkably prescient piece, Hastings noted Bowe's tour of duty "mirrored" the American experience in Afghanistan. Both, he wrote, were "marked by tragedy, confusion, misplaced idealism, deluded thinking and, perhaps, a moment of insanity. And it is with Bowe that the war will likely come to an end."

A week ago, President Barack Obama detailed how, after 12 years, the American military effort in Afghanistan is drawing to a close. Four days later, he stood with Bergdahl's parents at the White House to announce the swap.

Republicans who predict that the release of the five Taliban prisoners will result in a "Willie Horton moment" for Obama ignore the fact that the president will never run for office again.

As an election issue, Afghanistan will fade.

It's hard to imagine the prisoner swap will have much of an impact on the coming congressional midterm elections, or on the presidential race in 2016. After all, Hillary Rodham Clinton, who was secretary of state during most of Bergdahl's captivity, was said to be wary of any prisoner swap. And since she has been out of office since February 2013, no one can blame her for it now.

As for the personal attacks on Bergdahl, they should be faded. Five years of captivity, living in fear of beheading or some other gruesome death, is a severe penalty for what may have been a rash, immature act.

Let's not get caught up in debating his patriotism or courage. That is now beside the point. He has surely suffered enough.

Robin Abcarian is a Los Angeles Times columnist.

The problem at the VA: 'performance perversity'

BY DONALD MOYNIHAN

The acting inspector general's investigation into delays at Veterans Health Administration facilities points to problems so systemic that they should not be attributed to a few bad apples. But the report does not tell us why these problems exist.

The most likely answer is "performance perversity": Imperfect performance measures were tied to pay incentives. Such performance incentives have been portrayed as the best way to manage all kinds of public services, even as evidence of their problems mounts.

According to a 2012 VHA guideline on how to evaluate performance, being "results driven" constituted half of the evaluation for VHA network directors. The only easily measurable factor listed under the "results driven" category was that patients not wait more than 14 days from their desired date for an appointment.

This 14-day target was clearly taken seriously by administrators, to the point that they appeared to have created a parallel system of recording data, according to the inspector general's report released

last week. This parallel system made performance look better, but it bore little relation to reality. Schedulers reported being pressured by supervisors to enter a date when an appointment was available as the patient's preferred date, or to cancel and re-enter appointments closer to the actual appointment date to minimize the official waiting time.

The result was that the official data from the Phoenix facility reported an average wait time of 24 days, with 43 percent of patients seen in the 14-day window. But last week's report suggests that the true average wait time was much longer — 115 days, with 84 percent of patients waiting more than 14 days. An additional 1,700 veterans seeking appointments in Phoenix were not even on the official waiting list.

This pattern is similar to other examples of performance perversity. Britain has used performance targets in an effort to speed up health services. One was to see admitted patients within four hours of arrival at emergency rooms. The result? Ambulances were diverted from hospitals that did not want to miss the target times, or they were forced to wait in parking lots for hours before patients could be official-

ly admitted. Hospitals also had wait-time targets, and audits suggested widespread misreporting.

The value of any performance system depends on the quality of its data and how the data are used. When data are subject to manipulation, it's reasonable to expect negative outcomes, especially when targets are attached to strong incentives. The inspector general and the Government Accountability Office have been reporting for years that the VHA's wait-time data were unreliable, even as the data were being tied to financial rewards.

This issue is not limited to public-sector providers, or even to health care.

Performance perversity occurs when measures imperfectly capture the desired goal for a service, and when employees feel strong external pressure to achieve the target. If employees cannot hit the target honestly, they do it dishonestly. The moral compass needed to withstand such pressures is undercut by the performance systems. Organizational psychologists have warned that pay-for-performance systems tend to "crowd out" intrinsic beliefs in the value of a task. As employees come to view their targets as unrealistic or unfair, it be-

comes easier to rationalize manipulating the system.

The calls for resignations make for good political theater, but we need systemic solutions to systemic problems. What are our options?

One solution is to improve the measures by spending more resources to ensure data quality. But the inspector general's report makes clear that manipulation is so deeply embedded in scheduling practices that a routine audit might miss it, and that more significant cultural change is needed.

Another solution is to disconnect bonuses from imperfect performance measures. This cuts against the grain of how we think public organizations should work. But we need public employees to believe that hiding poor performance is rewarded. Veterans would be better served when employees identify and solve these problems as a routine part of their job rather than as whistle-blowers.

Donald Moynihan is a professor of public affairs at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and a member of the National Academy of Public Administration. This column first appeared in the Los Angeles Times.

WORLD

Thousands back Assad in Syrian election

By ALBERT AHI and DIAA HADID
The Associated Press

DAMASCUS, Syria — Waving photos of President Bashar Assad and dancing with flags, tens of thousands of Syrians pledged renewed allegiance to President Bashar Assad as they voted Tuesday in a presidential election that excluded a vast swath of the pre-war population and was decried by the opposition as a charade.

Some stamped their ballots with blood after pricking their fingers with pins supplied by the government in a symbolic act of allegiance and patriotism. Others chose to vote in full sight of other voters and television cameras — rather than go behind a partition curtain for privacy.

Men and women wore lapel pins with Assad's picture and said re-electing him would give the Syrian leader more legitimacy to find a solution to the devastating



Assad

three-year conflict that activists say has killed more than 160,000 people, about a third of whom were civilians.

Security was tight, with multiple rings of checkpoints set up around the Syrian capital and its environs.

Even as crowds of Assad's supporters flocked to the polls in Damascus, the sounds of war were inescapable.

At least three fighter jets roared low over Damascus during the voting, which residents said was unusual.

The dull sounds of explosions also reverberated in the distance as pro-government forces and rebels battled in nearby rural towns and ash plumes of gray smoke marked the skyline. Several mortar hits were reported in the capital, including one that crashed near the Qasba House on a major plaza, though the voting was largely peaceful.

The balloting is only taking place in government-controlled areas, excluding much of northern and eastern Syria. Tens of thousands of Syrians abroad voted last week, although many of the more than 2.7 million Syrian refugees across the region either abstained or were excluded by voting laws.

Assad's win — all but a foregone conclusion — would give him a third seven-year term in office, tighten his hold on power and likely further strengthen his determination to crush the insurgency against his rule.

The opposition's Western and regional allies, including the U.S., Britain, France, Saudi Arabia and Turkey, have called the vote a sham.



AP photos

Residents seek refuge in an underground bomb shelter during air raids by the Ukrainian air force in Sloviansk, eastern Ukraine, on Tuesday.

Ukraine military launches offensive against rebels

By NEBI QENA
The Associated Press

SLOVYANSK, Ukraine — Ukrainian troops on Tuesday launched an offensive against pro-Russian insurgents in the eastern city of Sloviansk and advanced through the city's outskirts, the nation's interior minister said.

Arsen Avakov said government troops broke through rebel positions around the village of Semenivka on the eastern fringe of Sloviansk. "An active offensive stage of the counterterrorist operation is underway in Sloviansk," he wrote on his Facebook page.

Local residents said several Ukrainian combat jets and helicopter gunships attacked rebel positions on the eastern outskirts of Sloviansk, and heavy artillery barrages have continued throughout the day.

An AP journalist heard sustained gun and artillery fire and saw plumes of black smoke rising over the city.

Avakov warned residents in Sloviansk and nearby cities of Kramatorsk and Krasny Liman to stay at home.

A Ukrainian military officer, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he wasn't authorized to speak to the media, said one serviceman was killed and 13

others were wounded when their vehicle came under rebel fire near Sloviansk.

The Interfax news agency quoted Vyacheslav Ponomarev, the leader of insurgents in Sloviansk, as saying that his men downed a Ukrainian jet and a helicopter gunship. His claim couldn't be independently confirmed.

Ukrainian authorities have repeatedly announced an escalation in armed operations, only to eventually back down. Government forces have in recent days

been noticeably reinforced to the north of Sloviansk, however, and deployment of air power over the past week has signalled increased determination.

On Monday, hundreds of rebels armed with automatic weapons and rocket-propelled grenades mounted a daylight siege of a border guards base on the outskirts of Luhansk that coordinates the protection of Ukraine's border with Russia. Border guards said they killed at least five rebels in repelling the attack.



A Ukrainian soldier takes position as he patrols an area close to Sloviansk, Ukraine, on Tuesday as Ukrainian troops launched an offensive against pro-Russian insurgents.

Islamist militia helps Libyan PM take office

TRIPOLI, Libya — A group of Islamist lawmakers on Tuesday accused Libya's outgoing prime minister of hindering the newly elected prime minister from taking office, the latest crisis to roil the North African country as a renegade general leads an offensive against Islamists.

The lawmakers' statement came a day after their ally, Prime Minister Ahmed Maiteeq, took power with help of an Islamist militia late Monday, according to a Facebook post by lawmaker Fatma al-Majbari. The daily newspaper Al-Wasat reported that militiamen from the Libya Central Shield — one of several militias in the government's payroll — accompanied Maiteeq to his office.

Thai junta lifts curfew at key beach resorts

BANGKOK — Thailand's military junta lifted a curfew Tuesday at three popular beach resorts but said the restriction imposed after its May 22 coup would stay in place for the rest of the country, including the capital, Bangkok.

In a televised announcement, the junta said it was ending the curfew in Phuket, Koh Samui and Pattaya "to promote tourism and to relieve the impact from the curfew in areas that are peaceful and free from political protests."

Report: 10 generals armed Boko Haram

KADUNA, Nigeria — Ten generals and five other senior military officers were found guilty in courts-martial of providing arms and information to Boko Haram extremists, a leading Nigerian newspaper reported Tuesday.

The news follows months of allegations from politicians and soldiers who have told The Associated Press that some senior officers were helping the Islamic extremists and that some rank-and-file soldiers even fight alongside the insurgents and then return to army camps. They have said that information provided by army officers has helped insurgents in ambushing military convoys and in attacks on army barracks and outposts in their northeastern stronghold.

Security tight on eve of Tiananmen anniversary

BEIJING — Beijing put additional police on the streets and detained government critics Tuesday as part of a security crackdown on the eve of the 25th anniversary of the crushing of pro-democracy protests centered on the capital's Tiananmen Square.

Police manned checkpoints, and officers and paramilitary troops patrolled pedestrian overpasses and streets surrounding the square.

The increased security comes on top of heightened restrictions on political activists, artists, lawyers and other government critics. Dozens have been taken into detention, forced out of Beijing or confined to their homes in other parts of the country.

From The Associated Press

WIRED WORLD

Swipe right for Ms. Right

Dating apps' popularity rising

By BARBARA ORTUTAY
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — So, a lady walks into a bar ... Wait, scratch that. A lady takes out her phone. With a left swipe of her finger, she dismisses Alex, 25, and Robert, 48. She swipes right when a photo of James, 24, pops up. It's a match. James has swiped right, too. They chat, and make plans to meet. They're only three miles apart, after all.

Welcome to the new world of dating. As the near-constant use of smartphones proliferates and as people grow more comfortable with disclosing their location, a new class of mobile dating applications is emerging that spans a range as broad as human desire, itself. Millennials, busy with school, jobs and social lives, say the apps save time and let users filter out the undesirables, based on a few photos, words and Facebook connections.

Unlike the dating websites of yore, with endless profiles to browse and lengthy messages to compose, newer apps offer a sense of immediacy and simplicity that in many ways harkens back to the good old days of just walking up to a pretty stranger and making small talk.

As with potential mates, there's an array to choose from.

ChristianMingle will "find God's match for you," Hinge's promise hinges on its ability to hook you up with friends of friends. Coffee Meets Bagel, meanwhile, will present you with just one potential mate at noon every day. Dattch, with a Pinterest-like interface, is for women seeking

For men looking for men, there's Grindr, Jack'd, Scruff, Boyahoy

and many more. Revealers will let you hear a person's voice and only show photos if you're both interested.

The darling dating app du jour is Tinder, helped by its simple interface, a host of celebrity users and a popularity boost from Sochi Olympic athletes who used it to hook up during the Winter Games.

Tinder, like many dating apps, requires people to log in using their Facebook profiles, which users say adds a certain level of trust. Facebook, after all, is built on knowing people's real identities. Your Tinder photos are your Facebook photos. Users can reject or accept potential mates with a left or right swipe of their finger. If both people swipe right on Tinder, the app flashes "It's a match!" and the pair can exchange messages.

Because messages can only come from a person you've "right-swiped," unwanted advances are filtered out. The system avoids one of the more vexing problems of older-generation dating websites, where users, especially women, can become inundated with messages from unwelcome suitors. They also offer a generation raised on Google and social media a chance to do background checks on potential mates.

"If you are in a bar and a guy comes to talk to you, you are immediately going to be freaked out and you don't want to talk to them because they are drunk," said Melissa Elard, 23, who uses Hinge and said she wouldn't have gone on a date in the past six months were it not for the app. "When you are using the app, you get to look at their picture and see background information. You get to decide whether you want to continue it or not. When I meet someone, I want to know everything about them before I go on a date with them."

While they are still new, dating apps — used for

anything from one-night-stands to serious dating, and even finding new friends while traveling — are emerging as the use of older dating websites is moving into the mainstream.

A recent Pew study found that some 9 percent of U.S. adults say they've used dating sites or mobile dating apps, up from 3 percent in 2008. Of those who are "single and looking," the number jumps to 38 percent, according to the 2013 survey. The crowd trends slightly younger, with the largest group of users between 25 and 44. Clearly, many people have grown comfortable with online dating just as they have with shopping, banking and booking travel over the Internet.

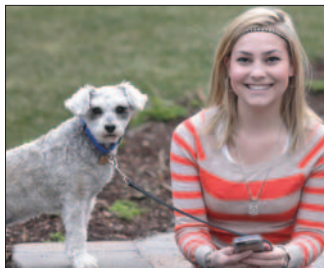
Creators of some of the more ambitious apps say they have their sights set beyond romantic matchmaking to what they call "social discovery," helping people meet business connections, new friends while traveling or moving to a new city. Tinder's co-founder, Justin Mateen, insists that his creation is not a hookup app and

Just don't tell that to Tinder users.

"I used Tinder before I found out about Hinge and it was creep central, it was just weird," said Elard, who lives outside Boston, runs a startup, works in jewelry sales and has a fashion radio segment. "I used it for a few months but instead of looking for someone, it was more like a funny joke," she said.

For some, though, Tinder can be liberating. Platt said the app "equalizes gender power," and noted that he hears as many of his female students talk about it as male ones.

"Everyone has the same finger and ability to click," he said. "It's not like the guy buys the drink."



CHARLES KRUPA/AP

Melissa Elard sits with her dog, Nike, in April. Elard said she wouldn't have gone on a date in the past six months were it not for Hinge, a dating app whose promise hinges on its ability to hook you up with friends of friends.



AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Driver flees traffic stop with cop in car

NJ FLORENCE — A man who allegedly fled from a traffic stop in southern New Jersey with a police officer inside his car is facing numerous charges.

Florence police told the Burlington County Times that Randy Eno Mase, 19, of Wilmington, Del., was stopped early Saturday for speeding.

When officers started speaking with Mase, they said he tried to drive off. An officer then entered the car through the driver's side door and tried to stop him, but Mase drove off with the officer still in the vehicle. A short time later, the officer was able to stop the vehicle.

Mase faces numerous charges, including aggravated assault, eluding and drug charges. He also faces several motor vehicle citations.

Protesters rally for teen charged with swearing

MI BRIGHTON — Protesters spouting obscenities have rallied in support of a southeastern Michigan man who was ticketed for swearing in public.

The Livingston County Daily Press & Argus said about 30 people turned out for the protest Saturday. The newspaper said the rally had an obscene name, and protesters shouted obscenities.

Protesters held signs that included "City revenue trumps 1st Amendment rights in Brighton" and "Brighton ... where free speech costs \$200."

Colin Andersen said a police officer ticketed him April 11 for disorderly conduct when he swore after a friend was ticketed for skateboarding in Brighton, a community about 35 miles northwest of Detroit.

Gov. opposes plan to allow election betting

NV CARSON CITY — Gov. Brian Sandoz has come out against a proposal to make Nevada the first state to permit betting on federal elections.

The Republican governor described himself as "more of a traditionalist" when it comes to betting.

"As I think through it, unless I'm convinced otherwise, it's not something I would support," he told the Las Vegas Sun on Friday. "The state has done fine on sports and horse-race betting and other events."

Sandoz noted state gambling regulators have opposed the proposal in the past, and a state legislative panel failed to support it this week.

Man auctions rare comic book collection

KY LOUISVILLE — The first glimpses of iconic heroes Superman, Batman and Flash are part of a rare comic book collection a Kentucky man is auctioning off to the highest bidders.

Peach insurance executive John C. Wise decided it was time

THE CENSUS

9

The number of West Virginia lottery players this year who have held Powerball tickets worth at least \$1 million. While five other states have had more people win \$1 million or more, they are bigger than West Virginia, which is No. 1 per capita. West Virginia averages one Powerball ticket worth at least \$1 million for about every 200,000 of its 1.8 million residents.



JEFF WHEELER, THE (MINNEAPOLIS) STAR TRIBUNE/AP

A grand old day

Karin Elboray, left, and Lucas Larson, right, decided it would be fun to walk along Grand Avenue in St. Paul, Minn., on Sunday dressed as bat pigs "just because," they said. People they encountered, such as Abigail Meyer, shown above, inexplicably wanted to hug them, and they were only too happy to oblige during Grand Old Day, which is St. Paul's annual one-day festival to kick off the summer festival season.

to sell the collection he's been accumulating over three decades, revisiting a childhood pastime that he picked up again in the 1980s after he became established in his career.

The books that Wise is auctioning sold for as little as 10 cents when they were published, many in the late 1930s and 1940s. Some of the issues in good condition today can fetch hundreds of thousands of dollars. He is auctioning about 175 comics individually, and online bidders have already committed at least a half-million dollars to the auction, which ends Tuesday.

Hunt for "HiddenCash" moves to the beach

CA HERMOSA BEACH — The California cash rush has moved to the beach.

More than the usual kids with pails and men with metal detectors were digging through the sand in Hermosa Beach on Saturday as the anonymous man with

the Twitter handle HiddenCash moved his upscale scavenger hunt from San Francisco to Southern California.

City News Service reported that the anonymous benefactor buried 36 small plastic Angry Birds orbs in the sand.

The account then tweeted: "Hermosa Beach, between the pier and the volleyball nets to your left (as you face the ocean)," at about 11:30 a.m. "Go!" Most were found by 5 p.m.

The same Twitter persona directed people to envelopes with \$50 and \$100 inside them in San Francisco last week.

The cash-dropper said his giveaways are a "social experiment for good."

3-vehicle crash kills 2; 11-vehicle crash kills 4

FL JACKSONVILLE — The Florida Highway Patrol said six people are dead after two chain-reaction crashes on Interstate 95 near Jackson-

ville, Fla.

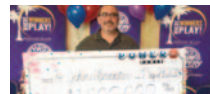
The crashes happened late Saturday in Flagler and St. Johns counties and closed sections of the major interstate through Sunday morning.

The Florida Times-Union reported that two people were killed in a three-vehicle crash south of Palm Coast Parkway in Flagler County late Saturday afternoon. Several hours later, four people were killed in an 11-vehicle crash in St. Johns County. Officials have not yet released the names of those killed.

Girl drowns at birthday party as guests sing

OH COLUMBUS — Police in Ohio said a 4-year-old girl has drowned in a pool during a party, apparently while guests were singing "Happy Birthday" to another child.

Columbus police said the family of Eleanor Schilling found her at the bottom of the backyard pool Saturday evening in Columbus.



JEFF WHEELER, THE (MINNEAPOLIS) STAR TRIBUNE/AP

Authorities said many of the dozens of partygoers were singing "Happy Birthday" to a 1-year-old before adults spotted Sinaia at the bottom of the pool.

Married 70 years, couple die day apart

PA PITTSBURGH — A Pittsburgh couple married for 70 years have died a day apart.

Their daughter, Suzanne Rosenberger, said her father, 95, fell ill after saying goodbye to her mother, 91, and died the next day.

The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette reported that the couple, Robert and Eleanor Schilling, died in late May at a personal care home.

Rosenberger said her mother could barely remember life before meeting her father. She said her mother ignored her family's wishes when she ran off to get married in April 1944.

From wire reports

FACES

Nyong'o joins 'Star Wars' cast

Three months after winning an Oscar, Lupita Nyong'o is going to a galaxy far, far away.

The Walt Disney Co. announced Monday that Nyong'o, below, is joining the cast of "Star Wars: Episode VII." The 31-year-old actress became a breakthrough star for her award-winning performance in "12 Years a Slave."

Also added to the cast was Gwendoline Christie, best known for playing the hulking Brienne of Tarth on HBO's "Game of Thrones."



When the principal cast of "Episode VII" was announced last month, the lack of women raised eyebrows. Nyong'o and Christie join an ensemble that includes John Boyega, Daisy Ridley, Adam Driver, Oscar Isaac and Andy Serkis.

Production is underway for the movie, which is being directed by J.J. Abrams. It's slated to open in December 2015.

From The Associated Press

Reznor to remain with Beats

Trent Reznor and officials at Beats By Dre agree: Reznor is still with the company.

Reznor, below, tweeted Monday that he remains the company's chief creative officer. Apple Inc. bought the headphones and streaming music company last week in a \$3 billion deal.

Reports speculated that the Nine Inch Nails leader would not follow Beats founders Jimmy Iovine and Dr. Dre to Apple as the company is absorbed. He wrote "YES I am still COO of Beats Music and looking forward to what lies ahead with Apple" on Twitter. A spokeswoman with Beats confirmed that Reznor remains COO and that rumor will not change.



The Grammy and Oscar winner joined Beats in January 2013 when plans to enter the streaming market were launched.

From The Associated Press

'Breaking Bad' tops on Twitter

AMC's "Breaking Bad" is the champion of a new television metric: more second-screen activity on Twitter than any other TV series last season.

The Nielsen company, for the first time, is measuring how many people are reading tweets about particular TV programs the night they are on the air.

"Breaking Bad," the drug-dealing drama starring Bryan Cranston, right, is the initial champion, with an average of 6 million people seeing tweets during each episode. The three hours both before and after, Nielsen said Monday, Last September's series finale hit 9.1 million.



Another AMC series, "The Walking Dead," came in second with an average of 5.17 million people seeing tweets about each episode. Three ABC series — "The Bachelor," "Scandal," and "Dancing with the Stars" — finished in the top 10.

From The Associated Press



JORDAN STRAUSS, INVISION/AP

Lucy Hale's debut country album, "Road Between," was released on Tuesday.

Taking the high 'Road'

Actress Lucy Hale doesn't kiss and tell on country debut

BY NICOLE EVATT
The Associated Press

Lucy Hale's fans might clamor to know whom she's singing about in her upbeat "Kiss Me" or her breakup anthem "Goodbye Gone," but the 24-year-old actress isn't spilling all her secrets in her debut album.

"I'll never reveal what it's about," said Hale, who says she's enjoying the speculation. "I mean some of it is a little bit obvious, at least obvious to the people that know me the best."

Hale is best known for playing Aria Montgomery on ABC Family's popular teen drama "Pretty Little Liars." (The show's summer premiere is June 15 on AFN-Family.)

The Memphis, Tenn., native described her pop-country album, "Road Between," as "modernized Shania (Twain)."

In a recent interview, she said singing feels more scary and vulnerable than acting, but in the end, she found the two-year

recording process therapeutic.

Hale wanted to be hands-on with the project, so she learned to play guitar and tried songwriting. She co-wrote one track, "Just Another Song," and made sure she felt a personal connection to the rest.

"It's all stuff that I've gone through. I knew that if I'm singing someone else's words it has to be 100 percent something that I felt before."

Hale will fulfill another dream when she performs June 21 at the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville. She had to cancel an earlier performance due to illness.

Hale said her first love has always been singing, and she hopes to continue juggling singing and acting like one of her idols, Tim McGraw.

"I love what he's done," she said. "He's still selling out arenas, but he's doing great movies like 'The Blindside' and 'Country Strong,' and he's got a beautiful wife and kids and has all these beautiful homes. So if I could, like, somehow find a small percentage of what he's done, that would be cool."

Illinois woman's winning streak on 'Jeopardy!' ends

The reign of the winningest female contestant in "Jeopardy!" history has come to an end.

Julia Collins, 31, lost during her 21st appearance on the pre-taped episode of the TV game show that aired Monday. The Chicago-area resident accumulated a total of \$428,100 during her 20 victories on the syndicated series.

Collins, right, was vanquished by Brian Loughnane, an investment operations manager from Scituate, Mass. Collins went into the final-question showdown in second place, but everything and lost it.

Loughnane, who is from Ireland, won \$22,600.

The clue that stumped Collins: The New England writer who in 1999 became the last person to win an Oscar for adapting his own novel as a screenplay. She failed to answer with the correct question: Who is John Irving? The novel and film was "Cider House Rules."

Monday's game "just didn't go my way," Collins said in a phone interview, adding, "I couldn't have loved being on the show more."

Host Alex Trebek's salute to Collins after her streak ended: "Well done, young lady." Collins said she was glad her record might serve as an example of female achievement.

"It helped dispel the idea that women aren't as good 'Jeopardy!' players as men, that would be great," she said. "It's good to see women being applauded for being smart."

Her winnings helped finance a dream trip to Paris, where she rented an apartment for a month. Some might fund future travel adventures, Collins said.

The previous top female player for consecutive wins was Stephanie Jass, who took seven games in a row in season 29. Collins displaced her and Larissa Kelly, who was No. 1 in total winnings with \$222,597.

Collins holds the No. 2 spot for most consecutive wins behind all-time "Jeopardy!" champ Ken Jennings, who won 74 straight games and \$2.5 million in season 21.

She is the third-highest money winner for non-tournament play on "Jeopardy!" behind Jennings and Dave Madden, who won \$450,400.

From The Associated Press



Man arrested on red carpet says he never hit Pitt

The Associated Press

The ex-journalist who was arrested after jostling with Brad Pitt at the "Maleficent" premiere last week said Monday he was merely trying to give the actor a hug and didn't mean him any harm.

Vitalii Sediuk, a former Ukrainian television reporter, told The Associated Press in an interview that he was in a fan area of the event that was open to the public when he went in to give the actor a hug. Sediuk, 25, has gained a reputation for outlandish pranks on red carpets in Moscow, Los Angeles and, last month, at the Cannes Film Festival when he crawled underneath America Ferrera's dress at a premiere.

His contact with Pitt led to Sediuk's arrest. He spent two days in jail, where he said he watched television coverage of the incident, before pleading no contest to battery and unlawful activity at a sporting or entertainment event Friday. He was sentenced Friday to three years of probation, a year's worth of psychiatric counseling

and ordered to stay away from Pitt.

"I don't mind an exhibitionist, but if this guy keeps it up he's going to spoil it for the fans who have waited up all night for an autograph or a selfie, because it will make people more wary to approach a crowd," Pitt wrote in a statement to People magazine. "And he should know, if he tries to look up a woman's dress again, he's going to get stomped."

Other news

■ Oliver Stone will write and direct a film about Edward Snowden, one of two high-profile films in the works about the National Security Agency leaker. Stone announced Monday that he plans to adapt "The Snowden Files: The Inside Story of the World's Most Wanted Man," a book by Guardian journalist Luke Harding. He will have deep-pocketed competition. Sony Pictures last month purchased the big-screen rights to Glenn Greenwald's "No Place to Hide: Edward Snowden, the NSA and the

U.S. Surveillance State."

■ Singer and culture star Rihanna received the Council of Fashion Designers of America's 2014 Fashion Icon Award on Monday night in New York.

■ "Mad Men" creator and executive producer Matthew Weiner will be honored with the 2014 International Emmy Awards Award in November.

■ Los Angeles police say they have recovered a luxury car that was stolen from Miley Cyrus' home last week. Lt. Andy Nieman says Cyrus' 2014 Maserati was found Monday in Simi Valley, about 45 miles northwest of downtown Los Angeles.

■ Aging radical personality Casey Kasem can return to the Washington state home where he's been staying with his wife if doctors approve, a judge said Monday, a day after Kasem, 82, was taken by ambulance to a medical facility after an argument between his wife and one of his daughters. The ruling marked the latest twist in the dispute between Joan Kasem and her stepdaughter, Kerri Kasem.

National temperature extremes
Hi: Mon., 111, Death Valley, Calif.
Lo: Mon., 27, Truckee, Calif., and
Leadville, Colo.

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SCOREBOARD

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myafn.net

College softball

World Series

at ASA Hall of Fame Stadium
Savannah, Ga.

Double Elimination: x-1 necessary

Thursday, May 30
Florida 14, Baylor 5 (11 innings)

Oregon 3, Florida State 0

Alabama 6, Oklahoma 2

Friday, May 30
Florida 4, Oregon 0

Alabama 2, Kentucky 0

Saturday, May 31
Baylor 7, Florida State 2, FSU eliminated

Oklahoma 3, Louisiana-Lafayette 1, UL eliminated

Baylor 8, Kentucky 7, 8 innings, UK eliminated

Oregon 4, Oklahoma 2, OU eliminated

Sunday, June 1
Florida 6, Baylor 3, Oregon eliminated

Championship Series
(Best-of-three)

Monday, Thursday 5, Alabama 0, Florida leads series 1-0

Tuesday, Thursday 5 (54-12 vs. Alabama (53-12))

x-Wednesday: Florida vs. Alabama

Golf

World rankings

Through June 1

1. Adam Scott	AUS	9.21
2. Justin Stenson	GB	9.18
3. Henrik Stenson	SWE	7.84
4. Tiger Woods	USA	7.44
5. Matt Kuchar	USA	7.05
6. Sergio Garcia	ESP	6.97
7. Rory McIlroy	GB	6.90
8. Jason Day	AUS	6.85
9. Jordan Spieth	USA	6.85
10. Rickie Fowler	USA	6.85
11. Phil Mickelson	USA	6.85
12. Jim Furyk	USA	6.85
13. Dustin Matuszyn	USA	6.85
14. Matt Johnson	USA	6.85
15. Hideki Matsuyama	JPN	6.85
16. Adam Scott	AUS	6.85
17. Justin Johnson	USA	6.85
18. Jason Durrant	GB	6.85
19. Steve Stricker	USA	6.85
20. Luke Donald	GB	6.85
21. Ian Poulter	GB	6.85
22. Victor Dubuisson	FRA	6.85
23. Ian Poulter	GB	6.85
24. Graeme McDowell	GB	6.85
25. Thomas Bjorn	GB	6.85
26. Brand Snedeker	USA	6.85
27. Miguel Angel Jimenez	ESP	6.85
28. Henrik Stenson	SWE	6.85
29. Lee Westwood	GB	6.85
30. James Donaldson	GB	6.85
31. Brand Snedeker	USA	6.85
32. Graham DeLaet	CAN	6.85
33. Webb Simpson	USA	6.85
34. Bill Haas	USA	6.85
35. Justin Rose	GB	6.85
36. Jason Bixt	USA	6.85
37. Thongchai Jaidee	THA	6.85
38. Ian Poulter	GB	6.85
39. Rickie Fowler	USA	6.85
40. Kevin Kisner	USA	6.85
41. Ryan Krummel	USA	6.85
42. Francesco Molinari	ITA	6.85
43. Justin Rose	GB	6.85
44. Gary Woodland	USA	6.85
45. Jason Day	AUS	6.85
46. Matt Jones	AUS	6.85
47. Russell Henley	USA	6.85

LPGA Tour money leaders

Through June 1

1. Stacy Lewis	USA	\$1,261,994
2. Michelle Wie	USA	\$1,261,994
3. Anna Nordqvist	SWE	\$736,464
4. J. Haas	USA	\$659,486
5. Karrie Webb	AUS	\$626,872
6. J. Haas	USA	\$626,872
7. Inbee Park	KOR	\$519,510
8. J. Haas	USA	\$519,510
9. Anirban Munoz	USA	\$483,125
10. Lizette Salas	MEX	\$476,615
11. Paula Creamer	USA	\$445,988
12. Chella Choi	KOR	\$417,994
13. J. Haas	USA	\$348,963
14. Cristie Kerr	USA	\$333,714
15. Angela Stanford	USA	\$307,131
16. J. Haas	USA	\$294,140
17. Jennifer Piller	USA	\$277,260
18. Na Yeon Choi	KOR	\$254,621
19. Shanshan Feng	CHN	\$253,235
20. J. Haas	USA	\$253,235
21. Eun-Hee Ji	KOR	\$219,043
22. Eun-Hee Ji	KOR	\$219,043
23. Eun-Hee Ji	KOR	\$219,043
24. Eun-Hee Ji	KOR	\$219,043
25. Eun-Hee Ji	KOR	\$219,043
26. Eun-Hee Ji	KOR	\$219,043
27. Eun-Hee Ji	KOR	\$219,043
28. Eun-Hee Ji	KOR	\$219,043
29. Eun-Hee Ji	KOR	\$219,043
30. Eun-Hee Ji	KOR	\$219,043

College baseball

NCAA Division I tournament

Double Elimination: x-1 necessary

at Devonport Field
Charlottesville, Va.

Friday, May 30
Virginia 10, Bucknell 1

Arkansas 3, Liberty 2

Saturday, May 31
Bucknell 5, Liberty 1

Arkansas 3, Arkansas 0

Sunday, June 1
Virginia 10, Bucknell 0, Bucknell eliminated

Arkansas 3, Arkansas 2, Virginia advances

at Carolina Stadium
Columbia, S.C.

Friday, May 30
Maryland 4, Old Dominion 3

South Carolina 5, Campbell 2

Saturday, May 31
Campbell 6, Old Dominion 1, 12 innings, ODU eliminated

Maryland 4, South Carolina 3

Sunday, June 1
South Carolina 9, Campbell 0, Campbell eliminated

Maryland 10, South Carolina 1, Maryland advances

at Alfred A. McKethan Stadium
Gainesville, Fla.

Friday, May 30
Long Beach State 6, North Carolina 1

College of Charleston 3, FSU 2

Saturday, May 31
North Carolina 5, Florida 2, Florida eliminated

College of Charleston 6, Long Beach State 2

Sunday, June 1
Long Beach State 5, North Carolina 4, 6 innings, susp., rain

Long Beach State 12, North Carolina 5, UNC eliminated

College of Charleston 4, Long Beach State 2, CofC advances

at Texas Tech Park at Light Field
Corral Gables, Fla.

Friday, May 30
Texas Tech 3, Columbia 2

Alabama 1, Bethune-Cookman 0

Saturday, May 31
Bethune-Cookman 6, Columbia 5, Columbia eliminated

Texas Tech 3, Miami 0

Sunday, June 1
Miami 10, Bethune-Cookman 0, B-C eliminated

Texas Tech 1, Miami 0, 7 innings, susp., rain

Monday, June 2
Texas Tech 2, Texas Tech 1, 10 innings

Miami 6, Georgia Southern 0, GSU advances

at Dick Howser Stadium
Tallahassee, Fla.

Friday, May 30
Kennesaw State 1, Alabama 0

Georgia Southern 7, Florida State 2

Saturday, May 31
Alabama 6, Florida State 5, FSU eliminated

Kennesaw State 13, Georgia Southern 5, 11 innings

Sunday, June 1
Alabama 6, Georgia Southern 0, GSU eliminated

Alabama 4, Kennesaw State 0

Monday, June 2
Kennesaw State 4, Alabama 2, KSU advances

at Jim Patterson Stadium
Knoxville, Tenn.

Friday, May 30
Kentucky 10, Kentucky 6

Florida 5, Kent State 0

Saturday, May 31
Kentucky 4, Kent State 0, KSU eliminated

Louisville 6, Kansas 3

Sunday, June 1
Kentucky 8, Kansas 6, Kansas eliminated

Louisville 4, Louisville 1, Louisville advances

at Bart Kaufman Field
Bloomington, Ind.

Friday, May 30
Indiana 8, Indiana State 4

Stanford 10, Youngstown State 2

Saturday, May 31
Indiana 2, Youngstown State 1, Indiana State eliminated

Stanford 10, Indiana 7, Stanford advances

Sunday, June 1
Stanford 10, Youngstown State 4, YSU eliminated

Stanford 10, Indiana 7, Stanford advances

at Hawkins Field
Nashville, Tenn.

Friday, May 30
Cal Poly 4, Sacramento State 2

Oregon 18, Clemson 1

Saturday, May 31
Oregon 18, Clemson 1, Clemson eliminated

Vanderbilt 7, Oregon 2

Sunday, June 1
Oregon 11, Xavier 8, 10 innings, Xavier eliminated

AP spotlight

June 4
1987 — Danny Harris defeats Edwin Moses with a 47-50 victory, the 400th

harris at meet in Madrid, Spain, ending the longest winning streak in track and field history. The 400th major league pitcher to reach the milestone by leading San Francisco to a 5-1 victory over the Washington Nationals in the first game of a doubleheader.

Vanderbilt 3, Oregon 2, Vanderbilt advances

at Swazey Field
Oxford, Miss.

Saturday, May 31
Washington 8, Georgia Tech 0

Mississippi 12, Jacksonville State 2

Sunday, June 1
Georgia Tech 4, Jacksonville State 2, Jacksonville State eliminated

Mississippi 2, Washington 1

Monday, June 2
Mississippi 3, Washington 2, 10 innings, Mississippi advances

at Alex M. Leitch Stadium
Baton Rouge, La.

Friday, May 30
LSU 8, Southeastern 10, 11 innings

Houston 3, Bryant 2, 10 innings

Saturday, May 31
Southeastern Louisiana 2, Bryant 1, 10 innings, Bryant eliminated

LSU 8, Houston 1

Sunday, June 1
Houston 9, Southeastern Louisiana 5, SE Louisiana eliminated

Houston 5, LSU 4, 11 innings

Monday, June 2
Houston 12, LSU 2, Houston advances

at M.L. Tipton Moore Field
Lafayette, La.

Friday, May 30
Mississippi State 5, San Diego State 2

San Diego State 1, Louisiana-Lafayette 0

Saturday, May 31
Louisiana State 1, San Diego State 2, SDSU eliminated

San Diego State 3, Jackson State 1

Sunday, June 1
Louisiana State 11, Jackson State 1, LSU eliminated

Louisiana-Lafayette 14, Mississippi State 1

Monday, June 2
Louisiana State 1, Mississippi State 3, Louisiana-Lafayette advances

at Allie P. Reynolds Stadium
Stillwater, Okla.

Friday, May 30
Cal State Fullerton 5, Nebraska 1

Oklahoma State 8, Birmingham 0

Saturday, May 31
Nebraska 8, Birmingham 6, Birmingham eliminated

Oklahoma State 13, Cal State Fullerton 2

Sunday, June 1
Cal State Fullerton 4, Nebraska 3, Nebraska eliminated

Oklahoma State 6, Cal State Fullerton 4, OSU advances

at Charlie and Marie Loup Stadium
Fort Worth, Texas

Friday, May 30
San Houston State 2, Dallas Baptist 1

TCU 2, Siena 1, 11 innings

Saturday, May 31
Siena 9, Dallas Baptist 8, 10 innings, Dallas Baptist eliminated

TCU 3, San Houston State 2, 22 innings

Sunday, June 1
San Houston State 9, Siena 2, Siena eliminated

TCU 6, San Houston State 1, TCU advances

at Reckoning Park
Corvallis, Ore.

Friday, May 30
Texas 8, Texas A&M 1

Rice 2, George Mason 3

Saturday, May 31
Texas 8, George Mason 3, GMU eliminated

Texas 3, Rice 2, 11 innings

Sunday, June 1
Texas A&M 9, Rice 8, 10 innings, Rice eliminated

Texas A&M 3, Texas 2

Monday, June 2
Texas 4, Texas A&M 1, Texas advances

at Goss Stadium at Coleman Field
Coralville, Iowa

Friday, May 30
UC Irvine 10, UNLV 1

Oregon State 2, North Dakota State 1

Saturday, May 31
UNLV 2, North Dakota State 1, NDSU eliminated

UC Irvine 14, Oregon State 2

Sunday, June 1
Oregon State 5, UNLV 1, UNLV eliminated

Oregon State 4, UC Irvine 0

Monday, June 2
UC Irvine 4, Oregon State 2, UC Irvine advances

at Baggett Stadium
San Luis Obispo, Calif.

Friday, May 30
Pepperdine 3, Arizona State 2

Cal Poly 4, Sacramento State 2

Saturday, May 31
Sacramento State 1, Arizona State 4, ASU eliminated

Pepperdine 3, Cal Poly 1

Sunday, June 1
Cal Poly 6, Sacramento State 5, Sacramento State eliminated

Pepperdine 10, Cal Poly 6, Pepperdine advances

Soviet Union in 32 minutes with a 6-0, 6-0 victory to win the French Open women's tennis title.

2009 — Randy Johnson earns his 300th win in a 5-1 victory over the Los Angeles Dodgers.

2013 — Randy Johnson earns his 300th win in a 5-1 victory over the Los Angeles Dodgers.

2014 — Randy Johnson earns his 300th win in a 5-1 victory over the Los Angeles Dodgers.

Pro soccer

MLS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

New England 6, 4, 3, 21, 16

D.C. 5, 4, 3, 21, 16

Sporting KC 5, 4, 3, 21, 16

Toronto FC 5, 4, 3, 21, 16

New York 5, 4, 3, 21, 16

Philadelphia 5, 4, 3, 21, 16

Montreal 5, 4, 3, 21, 16

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Seattle 5, 4, 3, 21, 16

Real Salt Lake 5, 4, 3, 21, 16

Colorado 5, 4, 3, 21, 16

FC Dallas 5, 4, 3, 21, 16

Los Angeles 5, 4, 3, 21, 16

Portland 5, 4, 3, 21, 16

Point: Three points for victory, one for tie.

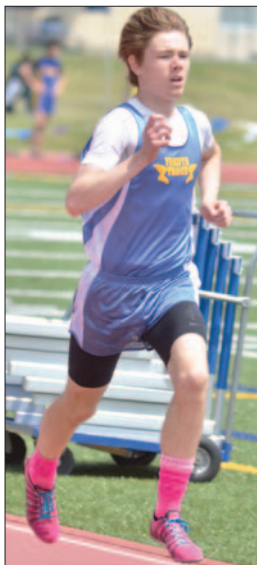
Wednesday, May 28
Portland 2, Chivas USA 0

Thursday, May 29
Seattle FC 4, Real Salt Lake 0

Toronto FC 3, Columbus 2

HIGH SCHOOL

ATHLETES OF THE YEAR



DAVE ORNAUER/Stars and Stripes

Yokota sophomore Daniel Galvin broke records in the 800 and 1,600 this season and thinks it's possible for him to go even faster next year.

Pacific boys track: Daniel Galvin, Yokota

By DAVE ORNAUER
Stars and Stripes

Even Daniel Galvin said he could not have foreseen running the 800 meters in less than 2 minutes this past season. Not after he'd tried the distance a month before the season started and managed just a 2:28.

"And I was gassed," the sophomore said.

Still, he stuck with an off-season workout plan given to him by Yokota coach and former Hong Kong Olympian Maggie Chan-Roper. "My legs were getting used to it and it got easier from there."

Much easier, if his times in the event and in the 1,600 are of any indication.

Galvin broke the Pacific record of 1:57.3, running a 1:56.89 on April 19 in Tokyo, then shattered his own record in the Far East meet May 19 at Yokota, clocking a 1:55.54. He also broke the 1,600 record with a 4:23.42 on April 26 at Edglen.

For those feats and others, Galvin has been named Stars and Stripes Pacific high school boys track and field Athlete of the Year.

It was as golden a season as an individual athlete could have. Besides the 800 and 1,600, Galvin won in the 400, 1,500, 3,000 and the 1,600 relay, the latter victory coming in the Kanto Finals on May 10 at Yokota.

The only race in which he participated and did not win was the 3,200 relay, taking second at Far East.

Galvin said in all the other events, he could run faster, but that his success in the 800 came out of the blue for him.

"I was really surprised by the result, because I had barely cracked 2 minutes last year," Galvin said, adding that 1:54 might have been the best time he could have run this year. "Next year, I want to get it down to 1:51 or 1:52."

He feels it's possible for him to run 4:17 in the 1,600 and 9:40 in the 3,200, which would put him in position to threaten the 40-year-old 3,200 record of 9:31 held by Roger Olson of Christian Academy Japan.

"I thought I could have gone faster in the 1,600 and 3,200. Compared to the States, my 3,200 times are subpar."

Galvin's father, Dan, is a mathematics teacher at Yokota and is not leaving any time soon. As he and many a Kanto Plain track observer say, the best may be yet to come from Galvin.

Pacific girls track: Tatiana Riordan, ASU

By DAVE ORNAUER
Stars and Stripes

Something changed between April 19 and 26 for Tatiana Riordan. Something that transformed her from a competitive runner into a dominant one, a record-setting one, completely different from the one who began the season.

As if moving from one season into another, Riordan ran the table from April 26 on, winning Kanto and Far East individual titles in the 1,600 and 3,200 in Far East meet record fashion, and also helped her American School In Japan 3,200 relay team set a Far East meet record.

"She came out of nowhere toward the end the season," said Bruce Carrick, meet manager for both the Kanto Plain regular season and finals and for last month's Far East meet at Yokota. "I wasn't expecting her to win" at Far East.

For rebounding and coming on so strongly as the season wound down, Riordan, a sophomore, has been named Stars and Stripes Pacific high school girls track and field Athlete of the Year.

The difference between the Tatiana Riordan the first three weeks and the last three weeks of the season was a matter of control, her coach Ryosuke Suzuki said. She had allowed others to control the races the first three weeks; she seized control herself the rest of the way.

"She decided to run her own race and find ways to win," Suzuki said. "Tanya just found a way. And it worked out for her."

She took eight seconds off her time in the 800, six seconds in both the 1,500 and 3,000 during the regular season. From 12:09.09 in the Kanto finals, Riordan posted an 11:50.50 in the Far East meet.

That puts her just over two seconds from the Pacific record of 11:48.1, set by Yuna Sakuma of Utsunomiya International in 2004. "We knew she was in great shape" from the cross-country season, Suzuki said. "It was just a matter of time ... it really wasn't a surprise."

Riordan might be just starting to tap her potential, which is good since there is a new threat on the horizon who may challenge Riordan for Kanto and Far East supremacy next season: Seisen freshman Brittani Shappell, who ran the 1,500 in 4:59.85 last season as an eighth-grader.

"It's going to be interesting," Suzuki said.



JOSHUA L. DeMOTT/Stars and Stripes

Vicenza's Megan Buffington throws a runner out at first base during the DODDS Europe Division II championship game last month. Vicenza defeated Naples 10-2.

Europe softball: Megan Buffington, Vicenza

By MICHAEL S. DARNELL
Stars and Stripes

GRAFENWÖHR, Germany — Sometimes student athletes distinguish themselves with one great game or one solid season. Sometimes, as is the case with Vicenza's Megan Buffington, they are so dominant that others can't help take notice.

Buffington's Cougars tore through the European softball tournament, outscoring opponents 60-6 on their way to their second consecutive Division II title. In that tournament, Buffington pitched in every single game and was the major factor in the Cougars holding their five opponents to a measly six runs.

"We definitely worked hard to get here," Buffington said. "We're always working 110 percent at every practice and it all just came together."

Vicenza's head coach Julie McClellan said Buffington's stellar performance was nothing out of the ordinary — at least for her — and the Cougars are counting on her to do it again next year, anchoring a team that will be losing some key players.

"We're so grateful to have her," McClellan said. "We just count on her bringing it, and she always does."

Buffington, a junior, pitched in 75 out of the 86 innings the Cougars played this year, and struck out 135 batters — 40 percent of the hitters she faced. She tallied 13 wins with only two losses. Her bat was almost as dominant as her arm. She had a .387 average, with six home runs and three triples and an .822 on base percentage.

"Every single year she's gotten stronger, not just with pitching, but with batting also," McClellan said. "Her swing is stronger, her arm is stronger when she's pitching and we know she's going to continue to do that throughout next year."

Buffington said that dedication to improving her game has led to her fitting softball into her schedule whenever possible. She's played for the Italian Palladio softball club, played on several Veneto teams, and has played in tournaments in the U.S., Italy, Spain, Malta, Germany and Croatia. This year, she was also the top pitcher for the Italian club Castelfranco of the Italian softball league.

Even though she has also lettered in volleyball and spends summers teaching children how to swim, Buffington said softball is the nucleus of her life.

"Softball is my favorite thing," she said. "I've been playing it since I could walk and I just never stopped. I love it."

Her Vicenza coaches say that love of the game has spread amongst her teammates, as Buffington continues to improve the game around her.

"She's always interested in helping all of her teammates," McClellan said. "So pretty much we had to rework out entire infield because we lost a lot of players and she showed she's not just interested in herself, but she always wants to help the other players. She really stepped up as a mentor. It's like having an extra coach."

As her junior year winds down, Buffington is already looking toward the future. She said she plans on attending as much summer softball camps as possible to improve her skillset, and she is in the early stages of picking a college to pitch for. But for now, Vicenza will get to keep their hometown hero for one more year, and nobody is more thankful for that than her coaches.

"It's not that we take her for granted, it's that we appreciate her and all of the work she does," McClellan said.

darnell.michael@stripes.com



GREG HOLLADAY/Special to Stars and Stripes

American School In Japan sophomore Tatiana Riordan won the Far East 1,600, and 3,200 in meet record times.

COLLEGE BASEBALL

NCAA tournament roundup

Bruce powers Kennesaw St. past Alabama

The Associated Press

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. — Kennesaw State's Jacob Bruce hit a game-winning, two-out, RBI double off the right-field wall in the seventh inning to advance the Owls to their first Super Regional with a 4-2 victory over Alabama.

Kennesaw State will play Louisville after winning the Tallahassee Regional on Monday in its first Division I postseason berth. The program moved to Division I in 2006.

Bruce also doubled to right field in the fifth inning and was the only Owl with multiple hits.

Pitcher Travis Bergen (9-4) earned the win after entering the game in the sixth inning and the scored tied at 2-2. He threw 3½ scoreless innings, struck out two, walked one and allowed one hit. Bergen pitched 8½ scoreless innings to earn the win against the Crimson Tide in the regional opener last Friday. He was named the regional's Most Outstanding Player.

Thomas Burrows (4-2) took the loss.

Louisiana-Lafayette 5, Mississippi State 3: Ryan Wilson and Matt Plitt combined on a six-hitter and the host Ragin' Cajuns beat the Bulldogs to win the Lafayette Regional and advance to the Super Regionals for the first time since its last and only College World Series appearance in 2000.

Wilson (6-0) allowed four hits and three runs and 6½ innings and Plitt allowed only two hits over a scoreless final 2½ innings for his fifth save for ULL (57-8).

Louisiana-Lafayette advances to play Mississippi, winner of the Oxford regional, at a best-of-three super regional in Lafayette.

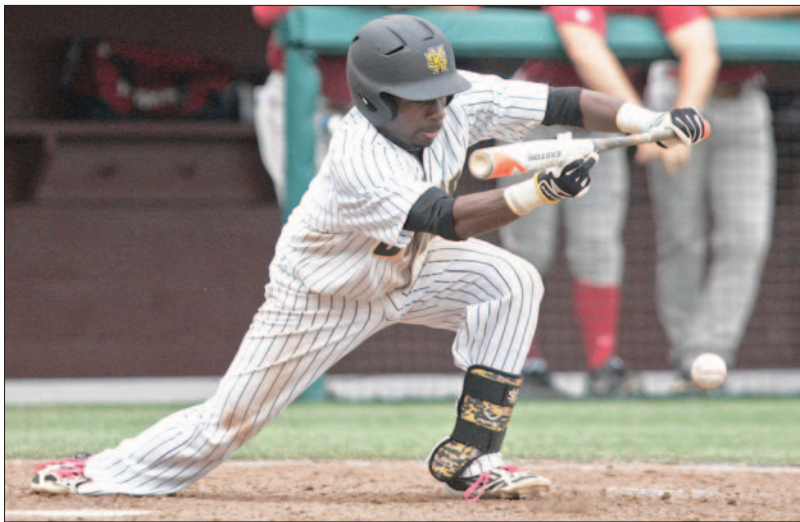
Houston 12, LSU 2: Connor Hollis had a two-run double to highlight a seven-run third inning and the Cougars defeated the Tigers to win the Baton Rouge Regional.

The Cougars (48-16) advance to take on Texas in the Super Regionals beginning on Friday in Austin, Texas.

Hollis greeted LSU reliever Brady Domangue with a two-run double to make it 5-2 and Ashford Fulmer followed with an RBI single to make it 6-2. After Domangue intentionally walked Kyle Survanke, Michael Pyeatte followed with a two-run single to make it 8-2. A sacrifice fly by Ratcliff capped the inning.

Mississippi 3, Washington 2 (10): Sikes Orvis hit a run scoring triple in the top of the 10th inning to push the Rebels past the Huskies in the championship game of the Oxford Regional.

Ole Miss (44-18) will travel to Louisiana-Lafayette for the Super Regional round this weekend.



STEVE CANNON/AP

Kennesaw State's Cornell Nixon lays down a sacrifice bunt against Alabama in the seventh inning of Monday's game in the Tallahassee Regional in Tallahassee, Fla. Kennesaw State won 4-2 and advances to the Super Regional round against Louisville.

Washington (41-17-1) threw five pitchers in the game. Alex Nesbitt (0-1) took the loss.

Stanford 5, Indiana 4: Tommy Edman hit a two-run homer in the bottom of the ninth to lift the Cardinal over the Hoosiers in the championship game of the Bloomington Regional.

Stanford (34-24) play at Vanderbilt in the Super Regional.

Wayne Taylor started the ninth with a single through the middle and moved to second on Brett Michael Doran's bunt before Edman's blast.

Miami 2-0, Texas Tech 1-4: Cameron Smith tossed a three-hitter to send the Red Raiders to the Super Regionals for the first time in school history with a victory over the Hurricanes in the Coral Gables Regional.

Zach Davis hit a pinch-hit two-run single in the ninth after the Red Raiders broke

through with two runs in the seventh.

Texas Tech (43-19) will face College of Charleston (44-17), the Gainesville Regional winner, in a best-of-3 series.

College of Charleston 4, Long Beach State 2: Morgan Phillips' sacrifice fly drove in Ryan Welke with the tiebreaking run in the fourth inning and the Cougars beat the Dirtbags to win the Gainesville Regional.

College of Charleston (44-17) advances to the Super Regionals and will next face Texas Tech.

Welke walked to open the fourth, and moved to second when Ben Boykin was hit by a pitch from Nick Sabo. The runners advanced on Sabo's wild pitch and Nick Rosetta relieved and gave up Phillips' fly ball.

Texas 4, Texas A&M 1: Chad Hollingsworth pitched a two-hitter, C.J. Hinojosa had three hits and the Longhorns beat the

Agies to win the Houston Regional.

Hollingsworth (3-0), making his first start this season, struck out three to send the Longhorns (41-19) against Houston in Austin, Texas for their first super regional appearance since 2011.

Madison Carter, who had singled to start the fourth, scored on an error to give the Longhorns a 2-1 lead.

UC Irvine 4, Oregon State 2: Grant Palmer singled home the go-ahead run in the sixth inning and the Anteaters went on to upset the No. 1 national-seeded Beavers to win the Corvallis Regional.

UC Irvine (38-23) advances to the Super Regional round for the fourth time in school history, and will face Oklahoma State.

UC Irvine took the lead with two runs on three hits in the sixth. Palmer singled home Chris Rabago and Adam Alcantara was hit by a pitch with the bases loaded. The Anteaters added a run in the seventh.

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STANLEY CUP FINAL

Want a ticket deal, Rangers fans? Go to LA

By MASON LEVINSON
Bloomberg News

NEW YORK — New Yorkers can save money while watching the Rangers play the Los Angeles Kings for the Stanley Cup by packing their suitcases.

It would cost New York fans less to fly to Los Angeles in two days, rent a hotel room and buy a resale ticket for Game 1 than it would to purchase an averaged-priced seat for Games 3, 4 or 6, which will be at Madison Square

Garden in Manhattan, according to secondary-market ticket aggregator SeatGeek.

Game 1 of the best-of-seven series is in two days in Los Angeles, as is Game 2 on June 7. The teams then head to New York for the next two meetings before alternating cities if Games 5 through 7 are necessary.

"There's a huge gap between ticket prices in Los Angeles and New York," Connor Gregoire, a spokesman for an New York-based SeatGeek, said in an email.

The average price paid for a resale ticket to Game 3 in New York is \$1,626, more than twice the \$679 average for a ticket to Game 1 at the Staples Center.

Round-trip flights to the Los Angeles area from Newark, N.J., listed on Travelocity.com, leaving the morning of Game 1 and returning the next day, begin at \$490.

The website offers a night at the airport Crowne Plaza for \$69, meaning the total price for a ticket, flight and hotel would

be \$1,238. That's \$388 cheaper than the average price paid for an MSG ticket, which could be used for cab fares and food.

The least expensive seat for Game 1 is \$495, while the cheapest for Game 3 in New York is \$1,087, according to SeatGeek.

The face value for tickets range from \$349 to \$2,499 at Staples Center and from \$484 to \$2,490 at MSG.

Games 3 and 4 at MSG are the most expensive finals-opening contests (meaning Games 1 and

2 at one venue or 3 and 4 at the other) that SeatGeek has recorded since it began tracking the resale market during the 2009-2010 NHL season.

The previous high was in Vancouver for Games 1 and 2 in 2011, when ticket prices averaged \$858.

Game 4 is averaging \$1,703, higher than what was previously the most expensive ticket at an MSG event, the 12/12/12 Concert for Sandy Relief that averaged \$1,026 a ticket.

Now a King, Gaborik to face former team

By LARRY LAGE
The Associated Press

The Stanley Cup finals will be a coast-to-coast matchup featuring teams within the nation's largest TV markets: New York and Los Angeles.

It looks like a win-win deal for the NHL.

The Rangers will draw a lot of viewers tuning in to see if they can win a championship for the first time in two decades. The Kings, meanwhile, have a shot to win it all for the second time in three seasons in what would be an impressive feat because of the league's salary cap.

Here are 10 things to watch when the puck drops Wednesday night in Los Angeles:

1 Motivated Marian: The Rangers traded Marian Gaborik 14 months ago to Columbus and now they've got to face him as he's peaking. Gaborik has an NHL-high 12 goals this postseason and he ranks fourth with 19 points. He had the tying goal midway through the third period of Game 7 at Chicago, where the Kings won in overtime.

2 Thanks, Columbus, Part II: Gaborik is not the only former Blue Jackets player in the series. Columbus traded Jeff Carter to the Kings two years ago. The Blue Jackets sent Rick Nash to New York in the summer of 2012. And they dealt Derick Brassard and John Moore to the Rangers last year.

3 Quick turnaround: Even though the Rangers have to hit the road to begin the series, they should be the fresher team. New York eliminated Montreal last Thursday, giving it almost a full week off before Game 1. The Kings, meanwhile, played late Sunday night in Chicago for their third Game 7 this postseason, traveled home and may not have much time to rest before the puck drops.

4 Call it a comeback: The Kings might be the toughest team to knock out in sports. They're the only NHL team to win three Game 7s on the road in one postseason; the second to do 7-0 when facing elimination in one postseason; the

fourth to rally from a 3-0 deficit in a seven-round series; and they didn't have the lead against Chicago in their latest decisive game until winning in overtime.

5 Late lead usually safe: The Rangers are 10-0 in the postseason when leading after two periods.

6 Lucky No. 7s: The Kings trio of Gaborik, Mike Richards and Justin Williams are 7-0 in Game 7s and Jonathan Quick is 4-0 in decisive games. Williams has seven goals and seven assists in Game 7s, passing Doug Gilmour's NHL record for points and tying Glen Anderson for the most goals in league history in Game 7s. Los Angeles coach Darryl Sutter has surged past Scotty Bowman and Pat Burns for the most Game 7 victories—seven, naturally—in his career. If Sutter steers Los Angeles into another Game 7, it will be his 11th behind a bench to break a record shared by Mike Keenan and Claude Julien.

7 Up the middle: The Kings appear to have a clear advantage at center. They've won 53 percent of faceoffs in the playoffs, trailing only Boston statistically, while the Rangers rank 12th out of the 16 playoff teams. Los Angeles has a pair of great centers, Anze Kopitar, Jeff Carter, and two solid ones, Jarret Stoll and Mike Richards. The Rangers, meanwhile, don't appear to match up quite as well at the pivotal position with Derek Stepan, Brad Richards, Derick Brassard and Dominic Moore.

8 Two-way blue liners: Los Angeles and New York each have a playmaking defenseman. Drew Doughty has four goals, 12 assists and as many points (16) as he had in the 2012 playoffs when he helped the Kings hoist the Cup. Ryan McDonagh leads the Rangers with 10 assists and he's tied for the team lead with 13 points.

9 In the net: Quick and Henrik Lundqvist are not among the three finalists for the Vezina Trophy, but Quick won the Conn Smythe Trophy as the MVP of the playoffs in 2012 when Los Angeles won its first Stanley Cup and Lundqvist was voted the league's best goal-



CHUCK MYERS/MCT

Los Angeles Kings' Marian Gaborik will face his former New York Rangers teammates in the Stanley Cup finals. The Rangers traded Gaborik to the Columbus Blue Jackets in 2012 and he wound up in LA when the Jackets dealt the impending unrestricted free-agent forward to the Kings at the trade deadline this season.

tender that same year. Quick is giving up 2.86 goals a game this postseason and that's at least one more goal than he gave up on average in the previous two seasons. Lundqvist is allowing just two goals a game and he blanked Montreal in Game 6 for his ninth career shutout in the playoffs.

10 Last, not least: Both teams roll four lines of forwards and when their final trio is on the ice it is not necessarily a break for the other team. Sutter does not label his lines, but Rich-

ards appears to be his fourth-line center and Trevor Lewis and Kyle Clifford are usually on his wings. Richards ranked fourth on the team in points during the regular season and has chipped in with eight points in the playoffs. Moore enters New York's fourth line with Brian Boyle and Derek Dorsett. Moore scored the only goal in Game 6 to eliminate the Canadiens and has three goals in the playoffs after scoring just six times in the regular season.

AP Sports Writers Greg Beacham and Ira Podeli contributed to this report.

Moment is here for Lundqvist

By BARBARA BARKER
Newsday

NEW YORK — This is Henrik Lundqvist's moment.

It's the moment that eluded him through his first eight NHL seasons and seven failures in the playoffs.

It's the moment that looked as if it might never come early this season when the Rangers goal tender struggled to adjust to a new system under offensive-minded coach Alain Vigneault.

This is the moment when Lundqvist can secure his legacy, his place in the hearts of New York sports fans, by helping the Rangers bring home a Stanley Cup.

Lundqvist has two Olympic medals and more wins than any other goalie in Rangers history, but he still needs to hoist that Stanley Cup on his shoulders to avoid being the Patrick Ewing of the Rangers — a great player who never gets his due because he never won it all.

Marty Biron, who backed up Lundqvist in goal for three seasons and is working for the NHL Network during the Stanley Cup finals, thinks Lundqvist now has a chance to end any discussion about who is the best goalie to play for the Rangers.

"Henrik is getting a chance to move ahead of everybody," Biron said in a phone interview Monday. "Everybody talks about Mike Richter and Eddie Giacomin, but mostly Richter. Even though Henrik has beaten Richter's record (for franchise wins), Richter has the Stanley Cup, and that will always put him up there at the top. Henrik now has the chance to be the Rangers' No. 1."

In April, a week before the start of the playoffs, Lundqvist talked about how winning the Cup was the one great challenge he had left. On Monday, it was clear that Lundqvist is ready to get the series going against the Kings.

"I'm excited," he said, "definitely look forward to this."

Lundqvist enters the Cup final coming off a 1-0 shutout of the Montreal Canadiens in Game 6 of the Eastern Conference finals.

STANLEY CUP FINAL

Showtime: Rangers face off with resilient Kings

FROM BACK PAGE

Before this year, no team that played seven games in each of the first two rounds had reached the finals. Now, both clubs have done it. The Kings taking it a step further with a trio of seven-game series.

"When you knew you were playing L.A., the adrenaline started coming a little bit more," Lundqvist said. "You've been thinking about this ever since you beat Montreal, but now knowing we're going to L.A., it was easier to focus on what's coming."

"You just try to now come back to the focus and mindset you had last week. It's been nice to get a little break here and get away from it a little bit because it's been that intense."

Both teams will be back to the grind on Tuesday for media day, leading up to the opener the following night.

The Rangers and Kings split two games during the regular season — with each team winning in the other club's building — but they haven't seen each other since Los Angeles' 1-0 victory at Madison Square Garden on Nov. 17.

New York opened with a five-game Western road trip as final renovations were being made at the Garden. Its only win during that stretch was a 3-1 victory at Los Angeles on Oct. 7 — a 28-save performance by Lundqvist.

"Great goaltending. Great defense. Great forwards. Great special teams," Kings coach Darryl Sutter provided as a quick scouting report on the Rangers. "We're up against it again."

The Rangers know that many, if not most, in the hockey world aren't giving them much of a chance to win the Cup. They neither mind nor embrace the role of underdog.

They have heard it before, and have just gone about their business.

"When you get into the NHL, you know how hard it is to win," forward Brad Richards said. "The underdog thing and the favorite thing really doesn't mean anything in the locker room. You have to go out and play."

New York needed seven games to get past division rival Philadelphia in the first round. The Rangers weren't expected to beat Pittsburgh from the start, and certainly not after they fell into a 3-1 series deficit.

Montreal was coming off a stirring seven-game victory over defending East-



JULIE JACOBSON/AP

The New York Rangers run through drills on Monday at their practice facility in Greenburgh, N.Y., before heading to Los Angeles for Game 1 of the Stanley Cup finals against the Kings on Wednesday.

By the numbers

7

The number of games won by the Los Angeles Kings this playoff season when facing elimination.

20

Number of years since the New York Rangers won the Stanley Cup. The Rangers defeated Vancouver in 1994.

0

The number of games the N.Y. Rangers have lost this postseason when having the lead after two periods.

SOURCE: The Associated Press

ern Conference champion Boston, so odds makers favored the Canadiens in their matchup against New York, too.

But here the Rangers are as the last team standing.

"To put it quite simply, we're up against the team that won the Stanley Cup two years ago and just beat the defending Stanley Cup champions. That, without a doubt, is battle-tested," Rangers coach Alain Vigneault said. "We know exactly what we have to do. If we want to have a chance, we're going to have to bring our best hockey of the year. It's as simple as that."

"We've had a couple of good practices, we're going to have another good one tomorrow, and we're going to be ready come Wednesday."

He added one more thing as he left the



Stanley Cup finals: Game 1
New York Rangers at Los Angeles
AFN-Sports
2 a.m. Thursday CET
9 a.m. Thursday JKT

media interview tent while wearing his sandals, to go prepare for a cross-country flight.

"Bring your shorts," he said.

Series at a glance

A capsule look at the Stanley Cup finals between the New York Rangers and the Los Angeles Kings:

■ **SO FAR:** New York beat Philadelphia in seven games, rallied from a 3-1 deficit to eliminate Pittsburgh and got past Montreal in six games. The Kings rallied from 0-3 to beat San Jose, had a 3-2 deficit before winning two straight against Anaheim and won Game 7 in overtime at Chicago to eliminate the defending champions.

■ **SEASON SERIES:** Tied 1-1. It has been nearly seven months since these teams played. Brad Richards scored twice and Henrik Lundqvist made 28 saves and Ryan McDonagh scored a short-handed goal in the third period to help the Rangers win 3-1 at Los Angeles in October. Tyler Toffoli scored the only goal and Jonathan Quick's previous backup, Ben Scrivens, shut out New York 1-0 in November on the road.

■ **STORY LINE:** The Kings are expected to hoist the Stanley Cup for the second time in three years in part because they've proven to be as resilient as any team in any sport. Los Angeles is the first team in league history to win three Game 7s on the road in one postseason, a run that it started by becoming just the fourth NHL team to win a best-of-seven series after losing the first three games. The Rangers turned a good regular season into their greatest stretch of success in the playoffs since winning the Cup in 1994 by rolling four lines and playing good defense in front of a great goaltender. New York might not be favored, but its team can win any game or series with a trio such as Lundqvist, defenseman Ryan McDonagh and winger Martin St. Louis.

■ **NEW YORK'S KEY PLAYER:** McDonagh. The two-way blue-liner is playing the best hockey of his career, leading the Rangers with 10 points this postseason and tying St. Louis and Derek Stepan for the team lead with 13 points. The pride of St. Paul, Minn., proved he belonged on the ice with the best hockey players in the world at the Olympics.

■ **LA'S KEY PLAYER:** Jeff Carter. He bounced around a bit, getting traded in 2012 and 2011. Los Angeles is thankful he landed on its team. Carter has nine goals (trailing only Marian Gaborik's 12 in the NHL this postseason) and 22 points (behind just Kopitar's 24) in 21 games. He did not always play up to his potential with the Flyers or for Columbus, but is producing a lot in the playoffs.

■ **SCHEDULE:** Game 1: Wednesday at Los Angeles; Game 2: Saturday at Los Angeles; Game 3: June 9 at New York; Game 4: June 11 at New York; Game 5: June 13 at Los Angeles; Game 6: June 16 at New York; Game 7: June 17 at Los Angeles (if necessary).

■ **PREDICTION:** Kings in 6.

— Larry Lage, Associated Press



McDonagh



Carter

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MLB



JOE SWEPP/AP

Atlanta Braves catcher Evan Gattis, left, congratulates relief pitcher Shae Simmons after he earned his first save Sunday against Miami.

Simmons, LaStella give Braves boost

Rookie reliever, 2B ready for home debuts

By CHARLES ODUM

The Associated Press

ATLANTA — The Braves received a needed boost from two players recalled from the minors last week.

Now Tommy LaStella and Shae Simmons are set for their home debuts.

Atlanta opened a two-game series with Seattle on Tuesday night. The starting second baseman was expected to be LaStella, who had back-to-back two-hit games in the Braves' weekend sweep at Miami.

The Braves also have a new power arm in their bullpen. Simmons, fresh from Double-A Mississippi, recorded a key out on Saturday. The right-handed reliever earned his first save on Sunday when closer Craig Kimbrel needed a rest.

General manager Frank Wren said Simmons, 23, filled a void left with right-hander Jordan Walden on the 15-day disabled list with a hamstring injury.

Walden "was exceptional in April," Wren told The Associated Press on Monday. "He gives us that solid end of the game guy, to be able to bridge to Kimbrel, and we were missing that. We think Simmons can do some of that."

Simmons left Miami with two game balls and valuable experience. He survived two hits and a walk to earn the save in Sunday's 4-2 win over the Marlins.

"Now that it's over with, I can kind of ease my mind," Simmons said. "I got through my first couple of appearances OK. Hopefully I just continue to work and get better from here."

Catcher Evan Gattis said Simmons wasn't rattled in his first two pressure situations.

"He showed good composure," Gattis said. "He didn't seem to get too shaken up. I think it was good that he was in that high-pressure situation (Saturday). I think that helped."

The clutch production from

LaStella, 25, and Simmons was especially important after the Braves lost four straight to the Red Sox. The three-game sweep of the Marlins kept the Braves in first place in the NL East before an off day on Monday.

"Both of them were brought up at a time when we had a need and they have performed quite well in getting their first taste of the big leagues," Wren said.

The Braves tried Dan Uggla, Ramiro Pena and Tyler Pastornicky at second base before finally calling up LaStella, who was promoted from Triple-A Gwinnett. He had two hits in his debut on Wednesday at Boston and is hitting .400 through his first five games.

LaStella's promotion led to renewed speculation the Braves might try to trade Uggla, who is hitting only .176. Wren insists the LaStella move and Uggla's status are "mutually exclusive."

"They don't impact each other," Wren said. "What we're looking for is a spark out of that position, wherever that comes from and however that comes about."

"In Danny's case, we would love for him to get something going, but at the same time we'll continue to play like we're playing."

LaStella likely will remain the starter as long as he provides a steady influence on a lineup which otherwise has been too reliant on all-or-nothing big swings.

"We feel like he gives an added dimension offensively that we need and that's plate discipline and putting the ball in play," Wren said. "He seems to fit well in the lineup."

Wren said Pastornicky, who was optioned to Gwinnett, needs regular playing time following a season-ending knee injury in 2013.

"Tyler really has missed a lot of time," Wren said. "He missed two months at the end of last season with the ACL, and missed most of spring training. We just felt it was in his best interest to go down and play regularly."

Scoreboard

American League

East Division		W	L	Pct	GB
Toronto	29	27	518	4	
New York	29	28	524	5	
Baltimore	27	27	509	4½	
Boston	27	30	474	6½	
Tampa Bay	24	34	397	11	

Central Division		W	L	Pct	GB
Detroit	31	30	585	—	
Chicago	28	30	492	5	
Cleveland	28	30	483	5½	
Kansas City	27	29	474	6	
Minnesota	26	29	473	6	

West Division		W	L	Pct	GB
Oakland	35	22	614	—	
Los Angeles	29	28	529	4½	
Seattle	29	28	529	6	
Texas	28	28	509	6	
Houston	24	34	414	11½	

National League

East Division		W	L	Pct	GB
Atlanta	31	25	554	21	
San Francisco	28	29	491	3½	
Washington	28	29	491	3½	
Philadelphia	24	31	436	6½	

Central Division		W	L	Pct	GB
Milwaukee	30	28	517	—	
St. Louis	28	28	474	7½	
Pittsburgh	26	29	473	7½	
Cincinnati	26	29	473	7½	

West Division		W	L	Pct	GB
San Francisco	31	24	554	—	
Los Angeles	31	28	525	7	
Colorado	28	28	500	8½	
San Diego	26	28	448	11½	
Arizona	26	36	390	15	

Monday's Games
 Cleveland 3, Boston 2
 Seattle 10, N.Y. Yankees 2
 Miami 3, Tampa Bay 4
 Pittsburgh 6, Minnesota 2
 K. White 6, St. Louis 0
 L.A. Dodgers 5, Chicago White Sox 2
 N.Y. Mets 11, Philadelphia 2
 Pittsburgh 10, San Diego 3

Tuesday's Games
 Boston at Cleveland
 Seattle at N.Y. Yankees
 Philadelphia at Washington
 Toronto at Detroit
 Seattle at Atlanta
 Tampa Bay at Miami
 Detroit at Texas
 Chicago White Sox at St. Louis
 N.Y. Mets at Chicago Cubs
 Kansas City at Houston
 Minnesota at Milwaukee
 Arizona at Colorado
 Pittsburgh at San Diego
 Chicago White Sox at L.A. Dodgers

Wednesday's Games
 Seattle (Iwakura 3-2) at Atlanta (Miller 2-3)
 Boston (Workman 4-0) at Cleveland (Kluber 6-3)
 Oakland (J Chavez 4-3) at N.Y. Yankees (Nunno 1-2)
 Detroit (Dickey 5-4) at Detroit (Porcello 8-2)
 Kansas City (Kohler 4-5) at Tampa Bay (Price 4-4)
 Baltimore (B Norris 3-5) at Texas (Martinez 1-1)
 L.A. Angels (Richards 4-2) at Houston (Gonzalez 4-4)
 Milwaukee (Estrada 5-2) at Minnesota (Nolasco 3-1)
 St. Louis (Wainwright 8-3) at Kansas City (Nolasco 3-1)
 Chicago White Sox (Joh Danks 3-5) at L.A. Dodgers (Beckett 3-2)
 Pittsburgh (Lirio 1-5) at San Diego (Kennedy 4-6)
 Philadelphia (A Burnett 3-2) at Washington (Strasburg 4-4)
 San Francisco (Petterson 3-2) at Cincinnati (Cingrini 2-5)
 N.Y. Mets (Matsuzaka 2-0) at Chicago (Lester 3-5)
 Arizona (Collier 2-4) at Colorado (Lyles 3-1)

Monday
Royals 6, Cardinals 0

Kansas City ab r h bi
 Aoki rf 4 0 0 0
 Davis p 4 0 0 0
 Wadsworth p 4 0 0 0
 Crow p 4 0 0 0
 Hosmer lf 4 0 0 0
 Lohmeyer lf 3 1 1 0
 Alcorn cf 3 1 1 0
 Perez 2b 2 1 1 0
 Aroscio 3b 4 0 0 0
 Butler lf 4 0 0 0
 Dwyer cf 3 1 0 0

Totals 39 30 3
Kansas City 000 000 000
St. Louis 000 000 000

E-J. Peralta (4), Griehk (1). DP—Hosmer 2, 3. St. Louis rf 1.00.
 City 4, 2B—Moustakas (8). HR—A. Gordon (5). SF—L. Cain.

Monday
Royals 6, Cardinals 0

Kansas City ab r h bi
 Aoki rf 4 0 0 0
 Davis p 4 0 0 0
 Wadsworth p 4 0 0 0
 Crow p 4 0 0 0
 Hosmer lf 4 0 0 0
 Lohmeyer lf 3 1 1 0
 Alcorn cf 3 1 1 0
 Perez 2b 2 1 1 0
 Aroscio 3b 4 0 0 0
 Butler lf 4 0 0 0
 Dwyer cf 3 1 0 0

Totals 39 30 3
Kansas City 000 000 000
St. Louis 000 000 000

E-J. Peralta (4), Griehk (1). DP—Hosmer 2, 3. St. Louis rf 1.00.
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Monday
Royals 6, Cardinals 0

Kansas City ab r h bi
 Aoki rf 4 0 0 0
 Davis p 4 0 0 0
 Wadsworth p 4 0 0 0
 Crow p 4 0 0 0
 Hosmer lf 4 0 0 0
 Lohmeyer lf 3 1 1 0
 Alcorn cf 3 1 1 0
 Perez 2b 2 1 1 0
 Aroscio 3b 4 0 0 0
 Butler lf 4 0 0 0
 Dwyer cf 3 1 0 0

Totals 39 30 3
Kansas City 000 000 000
St. Louis 000 000 000

E-J. Peralta (4), Griehk (1). DP—Hosmer 2, 3. St. Louis rf 1.00.
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Royals 6, Cardinals 0

Kansas City ab r h bi
 Aoki rf 4 0 0 0
 Davis p 4 0 0 0
 Wadsworth p 4 0 0 0
 Crow p 4 0 0 0
 Hosmer lf 4 0 0 0
 Lohmeyer lf 3 1 1 0
 Alcorn cf 3 1 1 0
 Perez 2b 2 1 1 0
 Aroscio 3b 4 0 0 0
 Butler lf 4 0 0 0
 Dwyer cf 3 1 0 0

Totals 39 30 3
Kansas City 000 000 000
St. Louis 000 000 000

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Monday
Royals 6, Cardinals 0

Kansas City ab r h bi
 Aoki rf 4 0 0 0
 Davis p 4 0 0 0
 Wadsworth p 4 0 0 0
 Crow p 4 0 0 0
 Hosmer lf 4 0 0 0
 Lohmeyer lf 3 1 1 0
 Alcorn cf 3 1 1 0
 Perez 2b 2 1 1 0
 Aroscio 3b 4 0 0 0
 Butler lf 4 0 0 0
 Dwyer cf 3 1 0 0

Totals 39 30 3
Kansas City 000 000 000
St. Louis 000 000 000

E-J. Peralta (4), Griehk (1). DP—Hosmer 2, 3. St. Louis rf 1.00.
 City 4, 2B—Moustakas (8). HR—A. Gordon (5). SF—L. Cain.

Monday
Royals 6, Cardinals 0

Kansas City ab r h bi
 Aoki rf 4 0 0 0
 Davis p 4 0 0 0
 Wadsworth p 4 0 0 0
 Crow p 4 0 0 0
 Hosmer lf 4 0 0 0
 Lohmeyer lf 3 1 1 0
 Alcorn cf 3 1 1 0
 Perez 2b 2 1 1 0
 Aroscio 3b 4 0 0 0
 Butler lf 4 0 0 0
 Dwyer cf 3 1 0 0

Totals 39 30 3
Kansas City 000 000 000
St. Louis 000 000 000

Mariners 10, Yankees 2

Seattle		ab	r	h	bi
J. Jones cf	4	0	0	0	0
M. J. Rodriguez lf	5	1	2	3	0
S. J. Jones lf	4	1	2	3	0
Smoot lf	5	1	1	0	0
Seager 2b	3	3	3	3	0
Zunino 3b	4	1	2	3	0
Encinosa rf	4	1	1	0	0
Miller ss	4	1	1	0	0
Kershaw 1b	4	1	2	3	0
Taylor 2b	3	1	0	0	0
Totals	36	10	12	10	3

Seattle 100 010 404-10
New York 000 000 000-3

DP—Seattle 1, LOB—Seattle 5, New York 2B—Seager (12), Zunino (8), Solarte (12), 3B—Seager (2), 1B—M. Saunders (4), Seager (9), CS—Cano (2), Ackley (2), S—J. Jones, En Chavez.

Phelps pitched 4 batters in the 7th. HBP—by Phelps (Jung). T—254-A, 41-539 (49,642).

Dodgers 5, White Sox 2

Chicago		ab	r	h	bi
Eaton cf	4	0	0	0	0
Victorino lf	4	1	2	0	0
Yescors 2b	4	1	2	0	0
Gilech lf	4	0	0	0	0
Alfieri ss	4	0	0	0	0
Illinois 3b	4	0	0	0	0
Flowers 2b	3	0	0	0	0
Quintan p	2	0	0	0	0
Petkewicz 6, Minnesota 2	4	0	0	0	0
Kierulff p	1	0	0	0	0
Totals	32	2	2	2	0

Los Angeles 000 200 000-5
Chicago 1, LOB—Chicago 3, Los Angeles 6, HR—J. Abreu (16).

E-G. Beckham (2), G. Gillespie (4), DP—Chicago 1, LOB—Chicago 3, Los Angeles 6, HR—J. Abreu (16).

Chicago 1, LOB—Chicago 3, Los Angeles 6, HR—J. Abreu (16).

Chicago 1, LOB—Chicago 3, Los Angeles 6, HR—J. Abreu (16).

Chicago 1, LOB—Chicago 3, Los Angeles 6, HR—J. Abreu (16).

Chicago 1, LOB—Chicago 3, Los Angeles 6, HR—J. Abreu (16).

Chicago 1, LOB—Chicago 3, Los Angeles 6, HR—J. Abreu (16).

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Chicago 1, LOB—Chicago 3, Los Angeles 6, HR—J. Abreu (16).

Chicago 1, LOB—Chicago 3, Los Angeles 6, HR—J. Abreu (16).

Indians 3, Red Sox 2

Boston		ab	r	h	bi
Holt lb	5	1	1	0	0
Bogaerts 3b	4	1	2	2	0
Podolski 2b	3	0	0	0	0
Ortiz 2b	4	0	0	0	0
Przybyl 3b	3	0	0	0	0
Gomes 1b	4	0	0	0	0
Gschirler 4	0	0	0	0	0
Overbay 3b	4	0	0	0	0
Aviles 3b	3	0	0	0	0
Totals	30	2	2	2	0

Cleveland 000 000 000-3
Boston 000 000 000-3

DP—Boston 3, Cleveland 2, LOB—Boston 5, Cleveland 4, 3B—Bosman (5), HR—Bogaerts (4), SB—Bosman (3), Kipnis (5), Aviles (6).

Phelps pitched 4 batters in the 7th. HBP—by Phelps (Jung). T—254-A, 41-539 (49,642).

Dodgers 5, White Sox 2

Chicago		ab	r	h	bi
Eaton cf	4	0	0	0	0
Victorino lf	4	1	2	0	0
Yescors 2b	4	1	2	0	0
Gilech lf	4	0	0	0	0
Alfieri ss	4	0	0	0	0
Illinois 3b	4	0	0	0	0
Flowers 2b	3	0	0	0	0
Quintan p	2	0	0	0	0
Petkewicz 6, Minnesota 2	4	0	0	0	0
Kierulff p	1	0	0	0	0
Totals	32	2	2	2	0

Los Angeles 000 200 000-5
Chicago 1, LOB—Chicago 3, Los Angeles 6, HR

MLB

Roundup

Tribe end Red Sox's streak at 7

The Associated Press

CLEVELAND — Justin Masterson found the strike zone after a rocky start and pitched seven scoreless innings as the Cleveland Indians ended Boston's seven-game winning streak with a 3-2 victory over the Red Sox on Monday night.

Masterson (3-4) walked four in the first three innings, but settled in and won for the first time in five starts. He allowed just three singles and struck out a season-high 10.

Lonnie Chisenhall hit a two-run single in the first off John Lackey (6-4) as the Indians won their fourth straight.

Xander Bogaerts hit a two-run homer in the Boston eighth off Bryan Shaw. Cody Allen worked the ninth for his fourth save.

Red Sox shortstop Stephen Drew went 0-for-2 with a walk in his season debut. He re-signed as a free agent last month.

Boston outfielder Grady Sizemore went 0-for-4 — he popped up for the final out — in his return to Cleveland. He was a three-time All-Star in nearly eight seasons with the Indians.

Mets 11, Phillies 2: Wilmer Flores hit a grand slam and drove in a career-high six runs, Bartolo Colon threw seven-plus sharp innings and visiting New York beat Philadelphia in a makeup from an April rainout.

The Mets took four of five from the Phillies and are 9-1 in Citizens Bank Park, dating to last season.

Pirates 10, Padres 3: Jordy Mercer homered and matched a career high with four of visiting Pittsburgh's 16 hits in a romp over San Diego.

Neil Walker added three hits and three RBIs, and Josh Harrison also had three hits to help the Pirates win for the ninth time in 13 games.

Dodgers 5, White Sox 2: Clayton Kershaw shrugged off a two-run homer by Jose Abreu in the rookie's return from the disabled list, pitching Los Angeles past Chicago for his first home win of the season.

Justin Turner's two-run single keyed a five-run sixth inning in which all the Dodgers' runs were unearned.

Brewers 6, Twins 2: Matt Garza took a shutout into the seventh inning and Mark Reynolds hit a two-run homer, sending host Milwaukee past Minnesota.

Garza (3-4) scattered six hits over 6½ scoreless innings against the team that brought him to the big leagues in 2006. The right-hander struck out eight and walked two for his first win since May 5.

Royals 6, Cardinals 0: Danny Duffy worked six innings of one-hit ball and Alex Gordon homered to start a three-run seventh for visiting Kansas City in a victory over suddenly punchless St. Louis.

The Royals had just off Jett Williams (6-5) in a scoreless game before they opened the seventh with four straight hits.

Marlins 3, Rays 1: Randy Wolf pitched six innings for his first victory since 2011, and host Miami handed Tampa Bay its seventh consecutive loss.

The 37-year-old Wolf (1-1), making a comeback from the second Tommy John surgery of his career, allowed three hits and one run. He struck out seven, walked one and won for the first time since he pitched Baltimore past Tampa Bay on Sept. 13, 2012.



KATHY KRONICK/AP

Seattle's Felix Hernandez won his fifth straight start Monday in New York, giving up two runs on eight hits. He struck out eight.

Mariners rally past Yanks

Cano booted in return to New York

By HOWIE RUMBERG
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Kyle Seager was so locked in Monday night he had no idea Derek Jeter nearly caught his short fly down the left-field line on a carom until he was safe on third with a triple.

Seager had another triple, a home run and a double in a rare feat not seen in more than 40 years, leading Felix Hernandez and the Seattle Mariners past the New York Yankees 10-2.

"It was a weird play," Seager said of the triple in the fourth inning. "I basically just kept running."

Hernandez (8-1) won his fifth straight start to match a career high. The Mariners broke open a game of odd bounces with a four-run seventh inning, and Seager hit a three-run drive in the ninth.

Robinson Cano was again relentlessly booed by Yankees fans, this time in a makeup of a game washed out April 30. In the lineup after sitting four straight with a bruised left hand, he went 1-for-3 with two walks. The former New York second baseman drew a mocking cheer when he was caught too far off first by David Phelps (1-3).

The durable Cano said he was a little scared at first returning from the injury.

By the fourth time up, he was fine.

"Hopefully we come tomorrow with no pain," said Cano, who had not missed four games in a season since 2006.

Seattle, which won at Yankee Stadium on April 29 and May 1, took all three games in New York for the first time since sweeping three in 2002. The Mariners have won three straight overall.

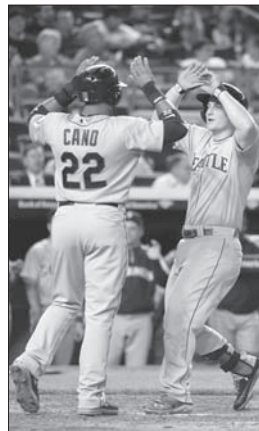
Seager became the first major leaguer to hit two triples and at least one homer and one double since Hal Breen for Montreal in 1973, STATS said. The last AL player to do it was Hoot Evers for Detroit in 1950.

"That's definitely a special one," Seager said. "That's definitely one I'll remember, for sure."

The Yankees missed Hernandez in April because of the rainout and they certainly wished they had not faced the Mariners' ace Monday. King Felix has been on quite a roll.

The 2010 AL Cy Young Award winner has not lost in nine starts dating to April 21. He was touched for two runs in the fourth when he kicked out his foot and redirected Ichiro Suzuki's grounder up the middle for a two-run single.

Hernandez gave up eight hits and two runs in seven innings. He struck out eight without allowing a walk. Hernandez last won five starts in a row in 2009.



KATHY KRONICK/AP

Seattle's Robinson Cano, left, greets Kyle Seager at home plate after Seager hit a three-run home run off Yankees reliever Alfredo Aceves in the ninth inning.

NBA

Oden eager for chance to hoist 'other trophy'

By TIM REYNOLDS
The Associated Press

MIAMI — It's become a tradition. When the Miami Heat win an Eastern Conference championship, managing general partner Micky Arison accepts the trophy and quickly hands it to someone who hasn't experienced that moment before.

In 2012, it was Norris Cole.

Last year, it was Chris Andersen.

This time, the moment went to Greg Oden.

Seven years after entering the league amid great fanfare and expectation, Oden — the No. 1 pick in the 2007 draft before knee injuries derailed his career — is heading to the NBA Finals for the first time. He grinned while holding the trophy throughout the celebration after the East finals were over, posing with it alongside tennis stars Serena Williams and Caroline Wozniacki, then retreated to the Heat locker room to dance with teammates.

"I was happy," Oden said. "I've never been here before, never won that before. So it was just an enjoyable night, and now it's time to go get the other trophy."

That other trophy is the Larry O'Brien Trophy, presented to the NBA champion. The Heat and San Antonio Spurs will start vying for it when the NBA Finals begin in Texas on Thursday night, a rematch of last year's seven-game series that ended with LeBron James, Chris Bosh and Dwyane Wade celebrating their second straight championship as Miami teammates.

"Those guys are definitely going for their legacy," Oden said. "I'm trying to get one. They've already got one. I'm just trying to get this first one. So I don't care if it's their third or sixth — as long as I get one, I'm happy."

Arison said he loved the joy that the East title moment brought to Oden. Teammates noticed as well, and while all the first-time East champions like Toney Douglas, Michael Beasley and Justin Hamilton also reveled in the accomplishment, some Heat players thought it was especially fitting that Oden held the trophy after all he's gone

Scoreboard

Finals

Miami vs. San Antonio
(Best-of-7; x-if necessary)
Thursday at San Antonio
Sunday at San Antonio
Tuesday at Miami
Thursday, June 12 at Miami
x-Sunday, June 15 at San Antonio
x-Tuesday, June 17 at Miami
x-Friday, June 20 at San Antonio

through health-wise since turning pro.

"That's what we're all about, man," James said. "That was big-time. We kind of just sat in the back and let the guys who haven't been a part of this kind of enjoy it. Like I said, we didn't take it for granted. We were very excited about it."

There's an irony in that the Spurs and the Heat are the last two teams standing this season.

Both were in the mix to land Oden last summer, and the Spurs made a compelling argument that nearly tipped the scales in their favor.

Oden was attracted to the idea of learning from Tim Duncan, the San Antonio star who is widely considered one of the best power forwards to ever play the game. The notion of playing for Spurs coach Gregg Popovich also appealed to Oden.

In the end, Oden picked the place where he figured he would have the best chance of winning a championship.

"If we win, I guess it was the right place," Oden said.

How much Oden plays in this series is anyone's guess. He played the last 4½ minutes of the Game 6 blowout win that clinched the East title against Indiana, his only appearance in this postseason.

Oden played in 23 regular-season games with Miami, and wasn't in either of the two matchups against San Antonio. This season was difficult for Oden, who worked diligently to get his knees right, then was bothered in the final month before the playoffs by an unrelated back issue.

He said he's ready to go if Heat coach Erik Spoelstra needs him.



WILFREDO LEE/AP

The Heat's Greg Oden lifts the Eastern Conference championship trophy Friday. After years of injuries derailed his career, Oden is happy to be part of a Finals team.

"I want to win the Finals," Oden said. "I'm here. Later on down the line, nobody is going to remember who lost. They're only going to remember the champion. So that's the No. 1 thing."

Oden confessed that he has allowed himself to daydream about what the moment with "the other trophy" would be like.

Four more wins, and that dream be-

comes reality.

"I'd mean we're the champions of the world, the best basketball team this year," Oden said. "That's what it's about, playing your best basketball when this time comes, who the best team is. I'm part of this team and that's what they brought me here for, to help get another ring. I'm just happy to be a part of it."

Briefs

Knicks' Jackson fined for tampering with Fisher

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Knicks President Phil Jackson has been fined \$25,000 by the NBA for a tampering violation involving veteran guard Derek Fisher.

Jackson told reporters last week that Fisher is "on my list of guys that could be very good candidates" to coach the Knicks next season. Because Fisher is under contract with the Oklahoma City Thunder, that was deemed to be a violation of league rules.

The Thunder were eliminated from the Western Conference finals on Saturday night. Fisher is widely expected to retire and told reporters after Oklahoma City's season ended that he plans to have conversations with teams about his future at some point.

Fisher just completed his 18th season. He played under Jackson with the Los Angeles Lakers, and helped that franchise win five NBA titles.

Noah tops all-defensive team votes; George 2nd

Chicago's Joakim Noah and Indiana's Paul George received the most votes on this year's NBA all-defensive team, released Monday.

Less than two months after a landslide victory in balloting for the league's defensive player of the year, Noah was the only player to receive more than 100 first-team votes and earn more than 200 points for the team. Noah received 105 of 123 possible votes, while

George had 65 votes. The rest of the first team consisted of Clippers guard Chris Paul, Oklahoma City forward Serge Ibaka and Golden State swingman Andre Igoudala.

It's the second consecutive year Noah was chosen to be the first team.

Four-time league MVP LeBron James and defensive player of the year runner-up Roy Hibbert were both on the second team. Noah dominated on the defensive end this season, joining Andre Drummond of Detroit and Anthony Davis of New Orleans as the only players in the league to average at least 10.0 rebounds, 1.5 blocks and 1.2 steals. Noah finished sixth in the league in rebounding (11.3), 12th in blocks (1.5) and helped the Bulls hold opponents to 43.0 percent field

goal shooting, the second-best mark in the league. He also had 1.24 steals per game.

George, widely considered one of the league's best two-way players at age 24, finished fifth in the league in steals (1.89) and was the only player to average at least 6.5 rebounds and 1.8 steals.

Seattle still hopeful of landing team

SEATTLE — Steve Ballmer's departure from the group looking to bring the NBA back to Seattle isn't derailed lead investor Chris Hansen's hopes of getting a team back in the region.

Hansen told The Associated Press on Monday that he is confident he'll be able to find invest-

ors to take Ballmer's place in his group that is trying to build a new arena and last year nearly bought and moved the Sacramento Kings to Seattle. Hansen is the majority investor, but said it would likely take more than one person to replace Ballmer's investment.

Seattle's hopes seemed to take a blow last week when Ballmer agreed to buy the Los Angeles Clippers for \$2 billion. Among other things, it raised questions about whether Ballmer's decision should be taken as a sign that Seattle's hopes of getting a franchise are dwindling.

In other NBA news:

■ A person with knowledge of the talks said the Detroit Pistons and Jeff Bower are nearing an agreement that would make him the team's general manager.

SPORTS BRIEFS/FRENCH OPEN

Briefly

Bills' Dareus faces
drug racing charges

The Associated Press

ORCHARD PARK, N.Y. — Buffalo Bills' defensive lineman Marcell Dareus faces drug racing, reckless endangerment and other charges after police say the 24-year-old crashed his Jaguar into a tree.

Police in the Buffalo suburb of Hamburg say Dareus was arrested Monday and released without bail pending a June 17 return date. The name of his lawyer wasn't initially available.

Dareus wasn't present Tuesday for the start of Bills' practice, after which Coach Doug Marrone was expected to address the arrest.

Police say they were responding to a complaint of two cars racing Friday afternoon when they learned one of the cars, driven by Dareus, had run off the road and hit a tree.

Last month, Dareus was charged in his home state of Alabama with possession of synthetic marijuana and drug paraphernalia. He called it a youthful mistake.

Marino joins concussion
lawsuit against NFL

PHILADELPHIA — Hall of Fame quarterback Dan Marino is among the latest group of football players to file a concussion-related lawsuit against the National Football League.

The 52-year-old former Miami Dolphins quarterback is one of 15 former players who filed a lawsuit in federal court in Philadelphia last week.

Marino and the other 14 plaintiffs join more than 4,800 others who have alleged the NFL misled players about the long-term dangers of concussions. The NFL has denied those claims.

The lawsuit doesn't specify any medical problems suffered by the plaintiffs including Marino, who retired in 1999. It seeks unspecified damages and medical monitoring.

The NFL and the original group of players agreed on a \$765 million settlement last August. But the settlement was rejected by a federal judge in January.

In other NFL news: ■ The Saints and Jonathan Goodwin have agreed to terms on a contract bringing the veteran center back to New Orleans, a person familiar with the negotiations said Tuesday.

Goodwin was expected to sign the one-year contract, worth \$955,000, on Tuesday and take part in a voluntary non-contact practices this week, said the person, who spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the deal had not been announced.

■ Seattle Seahawks linebacker Bruce Irvin has undergone hip surgery, but the team has no timetable on his return.

A team spokesman confirmed Irvin's surgery on Monday but had no details of what the surgery repaired.

Irvin started all 12 games last season after serving a four-game suspension at the start. The former first-round pick had 40 tackles, two sacks and an interception while making the transition from defensive end to outside linebacker. Irvin started Seattle's first two playoff games but did not start in the Super Bowl.

NHL reduces Carcillo's
suspension to 6 games

NEW YORK — NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman has cut Daniel Carcillo's suspension from 10 games to six, meaning the New York Rangers enforcer could play in the Stanley Cup Finals should the club elect to return him to the lineup.

The commissioner made the change Tuesday after holding a hearing with Carcillo on Friday.

Carcillo was suspended on May 23 after he appeared to twice elbow linesman Scott Driscoll, who was trying to keep Carcillo away from a fight, during Game 3 of the Eastern Conference finals. The original ban would have kept him completely out of the Cup finals, even if the series goes the full seven games.

Now Carcillo, who has already served three games, is eligible to play in Game 4.

Carcillo was originally punished under Rule 40.3 for deliberately applying physical force to an official, which carries a suspension of at least 10 games. However, Bettman decided that "Carcillo's actions were more appropriately deemed a violation of Rule 40.4 for deliberately applying physical force to an official for the sole purpose of getting free of such official during or immediately following an altercation."

Beckham would
consider a comeback

LONDON — David Beckham says he might come out of retirement and play soccer again.

The former England captain, who retired last year after a final stint at Paris Saint-Germain, said in a BBC documentary he had "a tough time" after hanging up his cleats and is tempted to come out of retirement.

The 39-year-old Beckham, who is trying to launch a Major League Soccer team and build a stadium in Miami, said "there's never been a player-owner, but maybe?"

Beckham traveled 800 miles into the Amazon rainforest for 12 days to make the documentary which will be broadcast on Monday.



MICHEL EULEN/AP

Maria Sharapova returns the ball to Garbine Muguruza during their quarterfinal match Tuesday in Paris. Sharapova won 1-6, 7-5, 6-1 to advance to the semifinals for the fourth straight year.

Sharapova, Djokovic move on

By CHRIS LEHOURET

The Associated Press

PARIS — Maria Sharapova needed a set to get going, and once she got going, she couldn't be stopped.

The seventh-seeded Russian advanced to the semifinals of the French Open for the fourth straight year, rallying to beat Garbine Muguruza of Spain 1-6, 7-5, 6-1 Tuesday.

It's the second straight match in which Sharapova lost the first set but completely controlled the third. Against Muguruza, Sharapova won nine of the last 10 games. In the previous round against Samantha Stosur, she won the last nine.

"When you just don't feel like anything is going your way, you want to try to find a little door to get into," Sharapova said. "It's always that little part that's the toughest."

Sharapova lost in the semifinals at Roland Garros in 2011, then won the title a year later to complete a career Grand Slam. She lost in last year's final to Serena Williams.

"It was so tough losing in the final last year, being the defending champion," Sharapova said. "This year, to come back, I have the extra motivation to go further, and to be back on (this) stage is a really nice feeling."

Sharapova will face Eugenie Bouchard in the semifinals. The 18th-seeded Canadian beat Carla Suarez Navarro of Spain 7-6 (4), 2-6, 7-5.

Bouchard is playing in only her fifth Grand Slam tournament, but she is already into her second major semifinal. She also reached the last four at the Australian Open in January.



MICHEL SPINGLER/AP

Novak Djokovic advanced to the semifinals with a win over Milos Raonic, 7-5, 7-6(5), 6-4. Djokovic is looking to complete a career Grand Slam with a win at the French Open.

Muguruza, who was playing in a Grand Slam quarterfinal for the first time in her career, eliminated Williams in the second round.

"The younger generation is ambitious," said Sharapova, who beat Bouchard in the second round at the French Open last year. "That's why they are in these stages of the tournament."

On another overcast day at Roland Garros, Sharapova quickly fell behind 4-0, losing 15 of the first 20 points. But she then started to land her shots, and her serves, with more consistency.

Sharapova finally held her serve in the fifth game, but she was broken again, this time at love, to lose the first set.

"I didn't do much in the first set to hurt her. She was doing many things well," Sharapova said. "I

Scoreboard

Tuesday
At Stade Roland Garros
Paris
Purse: \$34.12 million (Grand Slam)
Surface: Clay-Outdoor
Men

Quarterfinals
Novak Djokovic (2), Serbia, def. Milos Raonic (8), Canada, 7-5, 7-6 (5), 6-4.
Ernesto Gulbis (16), Latvia, def. Tomas Berdych (6), Czech Republic, 6-3, 6-2, 6-4.

Women
Maria Sharapova (7), Russia, def. Garbine Muguruza (Spain), 1-6, 7-5, 6-1.
Eugenie Bouchard (18), Canada, def. Carla Suarez Navarro (14), Spain, 7-6 (4), 2-6, 7-5.

Doubles
Men
Andrey Golubov, Kazakhstan, and Samuel Groth, Australia, def. Lukasz Kubot, Poland, and Robert Lindstedt (9), Sweden, 6-3, 6-3.

Women
Su-Wei Hsieh, Taiwan, and Peng Shuai (1), China, def. Cara Black, Zimbabwe, and Sania Mirza (5), India, 6-2, 3-6, 6-3.
Sara Errani, Italy, and Roberta Vinci (2), Italy, def. Ashleigh Barry, Australia, and Casey Dellacqua (7), Australia, 6-0, 6-1.

Mixed
Yaroslava Shvedova, Kazakhstan, and Bruno Soares (3), Brazil, def. Kristina Mladenovic, France, and Daniel Nestor (5), Canada, 6-3, 1-6, 10-3.

Anna-Lena Groenefeld, Germany, and Jean-Julien Rojer, Netherlands, def. Arantxa Parra Santonja, Spain, and Santiago Gonzalez, Mexico, 6-2, 6-4.

still had a fair bit of time to change things around. Little by little, I started playing a bit better."

On the men's side Novak Djokovic advanced to the semifinals for the sixth time in his career, and he'll be looking for only his second win at that stage.

The second-seeded Serb beat eighth-seeded Milos Raonic of Canada 7-5, 7-6 (5), 6-4 Tuesday. Djokovic is a six-time major champion, but he still needs to win the French Open to complete a career Grand Slam.

Ernesto Gulbis, seeded 18th, advanced to his first Grand Slam semifinal, beating sixth-seeded Tomas Berdych 6-3, 6-2, 6-4.

SPORTS



Semi tough

Sharapova overcomes slow start to reach French Open semis | Page 30

STANLEY CUP FINALS

‘... We’re up against the team that won the Stanley Cup two years ago and just beat the defending Stanley Cup champions, that without a doubt, is battle-tested. ... If we want to have a chance, we have to bring out best hockey of the year.’

Alain Vigneault
New York Rangers coach



It's showtime

King Henrik leads the Rangers into LA for first final in 20 years

By IRA PODELL
The Associated Press

HENRIK LUNDQVIST had his game-day face on at practice.

He still smiled and answered all the questions thrown at him Monday about the Los Angeles Kings — the New York Rangers' long-awaited opponent in the Stanley Cup finals.

“Exciting. Long flight,” the star goalie said Monday before he and his teammates headed to California for New York's first appearance in the finals since winning the title in 1994. “East Coast-West Coast. I'll look forward to this matchup.”

If there wasn't already enough pressure on Lundqvist to lead

his team to the championship, he is now part of the hype machine heading into Game 1 on Wednesday.

Headlines are screaming: “King Henrik vs. the Kings.”

“Clever,” he said with a slight laugh.

The Rangers have been waiting since Thursday to find out if they would face the 2012 Stanley Cup-winning Kings or the defending champion Chicago Blackhawks in the finals.

They took two days off before returning to practice on Sunday. Most of the players said they watched at least part of Los Angeles' third road Game 7 win of this playoff year that night.

So practice on Monday had a bit more focus for the Rangers as they knew exactly who was standing in their way next.

“Any team you play at this time of year is a good hockey team, especially a team that has kind of been around the playoffs and the Stanley Cup finals a couple of times in the last few years,” forward Derek Stepan said. “This is a very good hockey club. We have a tough challenge in front of us.”

The Kings returned to Los Angeles after their 5-4 come-from-behind overtime win at Chicago and took Monday off.

They have played a record 21 playoff games before the finals — one more than the Rangers, who eliminated the Montreal Canadiens in six games during the Eastern Conference finals.

SEE SHOWTIME ON PAGE 27

Goalie Henrik Lundqvist has put up Conn Smythe Trophy-type numbers in guiding the Rangers to the Stanley Cup finals for the first time in his nine-year career.

DAVID FORRESTER,
Newsday/MCT



Inside:

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